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THE GOLD FIEND:

—OR,—

SHADOWS ON THE HEARTH-STONE.

A Story of Boston and New York.

BY FRANCIS A. DURIVAGE.

CHAPTER I.

THE NEW YEAR'S EVE.

Late on a stormy evening, it was the thirty-first of December, but no matter for the year, a boy of about twelve, but large and well-grown for his age, was seated before a dull, unsatisfactory wood fire, that struggled in the bars of a Franklin stove, in a small room, poorly supplied with old-fashioned furniture. The attitude of the lad betokened weariness, and a book that he had been reading lay open on the spindle-shanked table he had drawn close to the fire. The only sounds audible were the sputterings of the green-wood sticks which seemed doing their best to resist the influence of the blue lambent flames that flickered about their moist bark, the ticking of an old-fashioned clock in the corner, and the rattling of the mingled snow and hail that dashed against the [illegible] more cheerful than a brisk, genial fire of a winter evening, so nothing is more dismal than a dull, smothering one, like that in the old Franklin. Into the former you can gaze for hours, and picture a thousand bright and glowing scenes in the molten embers, while the images suggested by the latter are all gloomy and repellant. The boy-watcher was an arrant castle-builder, though he found no food for his fancy where he so often looked for inspiration. Still he continued to gaze upon the grate with a vacant, anxious look.

His reverie was interrupted by the gentle opening of a door that led into an inner apartment, and the entrance of a female, attired with great plainness. She had passed the heyday of life and was still handsome, though care and sickness had hollowed her cheeks, and faintly pencilled lines upon her forehead. There was that grace in her bearing which almost always accompanies beauty, and an air of general refinement about her, though the size and coarseness of her hands showed that she had been accustomed to severe toil.

"Mat," said the woman, in a low tone, which she vainly endeavored to render steady as she spoke, "you must go after the doctor, and your father. Bessie—"

"Good Heavens, mother!" interrupted the boy, starting to his feet. "Is she worse?"

"Hush!" said Mrs. Milford, for that was her name. "Don't speak so loud. Bessie is asleep, but she's so disturbed and restless and flushed, that I'm afeared of the worst. Anyhow, I'd rather see Dr. Biggin—for if anything should happen, whilst your father was away—I'm sure he'd never forgive me. He has a good heart—the heart of a born gentleman as he is," added the poor woman, drying her moist eyes with the corner of her apron.

"I'll go, mother, instantly," said the boy.

"First to the doctor's," said Mrs. Milford; "he'll tell you where to find father most likely—they're great cronies."

Mat Milford waited for no more. In another moment he was in the dimly-lighted street. It was a raging storm. Masses of snow had fallen during a low temperature, and had drifted in great heaps before the weather had moderated, and the sleet was now driving down upon the motionless ridges in an arrowy shower.

Dr. Zenas Biggin, an apothecary and physician, occupied a store directly opposite the Milfords' house, which was situated in a narrow, crooked street, at the west end of Boston. The houses in this quarter were mostly of wood, and many of them of great antiquity, one or two having the upper stories projecting over the lower ones, a style of architecture in vogue during the ante-revolutionary period.

The apothecary's store could not boast the elegance and cleanliness indispensable to similar establishments in our own day. On the contrary, it was even shabbier than most druggists' shops were, at the period of the opening of our story—some thirty years ago. It had a narrow front, with a low door, and little, mean windows which were never washed except by rain storms, and which were so filmy that during the day time, it was almost impossible for a passer-by to see into the interior. But on shelves in these windows was the usual array of globular glass vessels, filled with green, scarlet and yellow fluids. Tallow candles, set in tin candlesticks, darting their rays through the colored media referred to, produced a highly ornamental effect on the countenances of those idlers whom curiosity arrested for a moment within the sphere of their radiance. Boys contemplating fossil sticks of candy hermetically sealed up in never-opened bottles, or sluggish leeches adhering to the sides of glass jars, were alternately affected with the scarlet fever and the jaundice, as they stood at the apothecary's window; and the watchman who took his customary nap against the opposite lamp-post, was transformed into a pea-green statue of the intensest verdancy.

The effects of these lurid lights had frequently amused young Milford by the hour together, as he watched them of an evening from his father's shop window (which he was allowed to [illegible] in the country a variety store, opposite)—but now he thought only of the danger of his little sick sister, and saw only his mother's anxious look as she sent him on the errand.

Entering the apothecary's, he found only the doctor's assistant, a boy of sixteen, with a small head, a cadaverous countenance, and long, thin limbs, loosely hung together, like a skeleton on wires. It was the popular belief in the neighborhood, that the doctor, who was a distinguished inventor of patent medicines, employed this young gentleman as a test—and that his meagreness was the result of his being compelled to swallow specimens of all of his employer's compounds. It was supposed that long practice had enabled him to imbibe any kind of "doctor's stuff" with impunity, and that he was rather partial to infinitesimal doses of strychnine and hellebore, and that assafœtida and chamomile flowers formed his ordinary diet. He had been for years a sort of fixture in the shop. He took his meals—whatever they were, in the shop—he slept in a little sort of closet attached to the laboratory, in company with a couple of skeletons, and some anatomical preparations, and was never seen out of doors, except when sent of errands. In these cases he shambled and shuffled along with an exceedingly ungainly, but swift gait, and always returned to the Head of Hippocrates—for by a graven image of that worthy, was Biggin's establishment distinguished—as speedily as possible. In truth, poor Jack Glossop had little temptation to go abroad. He had no friends—for he was an orphan; and an old grandmother who had brought him up was in her grave—and he despaired of making friends in that world of which he was so ignorant. The boys of the neighborhood regarded him with a mixture of aversion and contempt—aversion on account of his complicity with the doctor in the compounding of deadly or disgusting mixtures, and the preparation of anatomical specimens, and contempt for his shabbiness—boys in general being the greatest aristocrats living. And, in truth, the apothecary's boy's habiliments were not very well calculated to inspire the respect which even grown men and educated men feel for the handiwork of the tailor. He wore the same clothes now that he had worn for six years. If they were old-fashioned then, what had they become in the lapse of time? If they were a tight fit, rather, so many years ago, how preposterously close did they now set. His bony arms dangled out of the sleeves of his jacket. There was a wide space between his shrunken waistcoat and the waistband of his pantaloons, and the latter garments reached but little way below his knees. It is true, that an attempt had been made to extend their longitude by means of long leather straps passing under the soles of the huge square-toed shoes, many sizes too large for the wearer, which he had inherited from his master, but this scheme had been abandoned from economical principles, as it was apparent that the weakness of the cloth would not long endure the continuous strain put upon it. These garments, such as they were, had been originally black. But the color had been changed, by the action of various acids, into parti-colored hue, which did not by any means improve their appearance. Such was the individual, perched upon a high, three-legged stool, who sat, not at the "receipt of custom," but in forlorn expectation of it, behind the counter of Dr. Biggin's establishment, as Mat entered and whom we take some care in introducing to the reader, as he must occupy an important part in the Life Drama that will be illustrated in the course of our story.

"Is the doctor in?" asked Mat.

"No," replied the cadaverous boy, looking not at the questioner, but at a bunch of faded fly-papers, depending from the ceiling.

"When will he be back?"

"Can't say," replied the assistant, addressing his reply, this time, to a promising jar of leeches.

"Where can I find him, do you think?"

"Cat and Mastiff," said the interlocutor, transferring his regards to a festoon of empty phials.

"Thank you, I'll go there for him."

The long, ghastly boy nodded to a jar of tamarinds, and the messenger passed out of the shop.

Fortunately the Cat and Mastiff, a public house so called from its sign, which represented a dog worrying a kitten, was not a great way off. The quarter of the city to which we have introduced our readers was within the jail limits, which included that space to which poor debtors able to procure bail were confined by the tender mercies of the law. It was, on that account, a perfect microcosm, containing shops of all sorts, cheap boarding-houses, taverns and bar-rooms, and was inhabited permanently or temporarily by representatives of all professions. The bar-room of the Cat and Mastiff, which was the Tremont or St. Nicholas of the quarter, united the elite of the popular[illegible] An air of intense shabby [illegible] finery, in the shape of red bombazine curtains, garnished the front windows. The furniture was of mahogany, but like most of the frequenters of the room, it had seen its best days. The great table on which the newspapers were spread, stood on spliced legs, like a gentleman continuing business on an extension. The chairs were not all of them reliable. Some of the seats were suggestive of strawbail. The mirrors sadly lacked silvering, and the frames were at once tawdry and tarnished. The pictures on the wall, oil paintings and engravings, were in the same condition—dingy and fly-spotted. A larger portion of these were portraits of race horses; but there were some sketches of the cockpit, and a spirited representation of the encounter between the Yankee Pet and the Manchester Game-chicken.

The bar occupied the further extremity, and was a dazzling mixture of brass rail and beer-pump, slops and veneering. There were tumblers of cigars at one end, and oysters at the other, while against a wall of mirror behind, rose, tier upon tier, bottles and decanters, flanked by faded lemons of the most undoubted antiquity. Round a huge stove in the centre of the room, were crowded some twenty men; some of them sipping hot whiskey punch from smoking tumblers, others puffing industriously at very inodorous cigars, and nearly all talking at the same time. There were one or two briefless lawyers—a broken-down politician or so—a very red-nosed gentleman, who was addressed as General Somebody—a distinguished horsejockey, whose reputation rested on his having hocussed the favorite at the Union course races—a gambler under a temporary cloud, a thimble-rigger's toady, and a few persons of less dubious position in society, among whom Mat recognized the objects of his search. Harvey Milford, the father of our hero, was, or rather had been, a handsome man. His features were regular, and his countenance had that air which is recognized as aristocratic, even in our republican country. The brilliancy of his dark eyes, however, was now somewhat dimmed by irregular habits—and many a streak of silver gave a metallic brilliancy to waving hair, once black as night. A tendency to corpulence was noticeable in his figure, and an unhealthy red flush overspread his face and tinged his small, but somewhat swollen hands. His dress was fashionably cut, but rather threadbare. His companion, Dr. Biggin, comfortably installed in an arm-chair, and puffing forth heavy clouds of smoke from a cigar, afforded a striking contrast to Mr. Milford. He was short and thick-set, with a short neck, short arms, and clumsy, short-fingered hands, and was attired in a suit of rusty black. His eyes were a dull gray, the orbits having a decided yellow hue, and one of them being afflicted with that optical aberration known as strabismus. His short, thick nose, the nostrils of which had an upward tendency, his short thick lips, and his squabby chin, testified what an eye to "keeping" the great Artist, Nature, has in all her productions. The doctor's hair was sparse and of a sandy-gray hue. Round his neck was carelessly knotted a cravat it would be base flattery to term white.

Mat timidly approached his father, and touching him gently on the shoulder, whispered a few words in his ear. The intelligence thus conveyed seemed, to do him justice, to startle him.

"Little Bessie worse!" he said. "Doctor, do you hear that?"

"Only one of your good woman's whims," grunted the doctor, in a husky voice. "She was getting on very well at my last visit."

"Mother has had a good deal of experience in sickness," Matthew ventured to say; "and she is of opinion that my poor little sister is decidedly worse."

"Pray, young gentleman," said the doctor, wheeling his chair round, and gazing upon the young speaker with elevated eyebrows—"how old are you?"

"Come—come, doctor," said Mr. Milford, rising. "You must go with us."

"As you say, my dear friend," growled the doctor, tossing his cigar into the fire, and rising, in turn. "I say, young gentleman, what sort of weather is it?"

"A severe storm," answered Mat.

"I thought so—just my luck," growled the doctor. "Harvey, aint you going to ask us?" and he nodded significantly with his head towards the bar.

"O, certainly—doctor—certainly," answered Milford, turning towards the bar.

Mat pulled his father timidly by the sleeve. As Milford turned to look at his little son, he saw there were tears in his eyes.

"Father," said the boy, gently, "if I were you, I wouldn't drink any more, to-night."

"Why, sir?" said Milford, sternly, and shaking off the small hand. "Was that a message for me—or is it out of your own head?"

The boy shook his head sadly. "Nobody told me to say it," he said.

"Very well, sir," said Milford. "When I want your advice, I will ask you for it. I rather think I am old enough to take care of myself, without directions from a boy."

A slatternly, but handsome girl, with flashing black eyes, and large gold ear-drops, waited on the gentlemen.

"What's yours?" she said, to Milford.

"Brandy—dark," was the reply. "That's your prescription—aint it, doctor?"

"For your complaint," said the man of science. "For mine, the remedy is—"

"Gin," said the bar-maid, placing a long stone bottle before the doctor.

"Mary, my dear, you deserve to be an M. D." said the doctor, bringing his strabismus to bear fearfully upon the dirty Hebe. And pouring out half a tumbler, and repelling the proffered water pitcher, with a magnificent gesture, he swallowed it at one gulp.

Milford having disposed of his brandy in the same way, paid for the stimulants, and then accompanied the doctor into the street, Mat following close behind. The boy had noticed with deep pain, that his father's step was not perfectly steady. The doctor had probably made the same observation.

"Here, Harvey," said he. "Give me your arm—what a head you've got! I'm as steady as a rock. Matty, go round and take your father's hand—it's deuced bad walking, and he might trip without our help. He! he! Steady she goes."

They walked on in silence, till they reached the apothecary's door.

"Hold on!" said Biggin. "I want just to look in here one moment."

"Hullo!" he shouted, putting his head inside the doorway. "Jack, rascal! are you awake?"

"Wide awake, sir, please," said the cadaverous boy, who was still sitting where Mat had left him.

"Come off that stool then, sirrah—blow out the candles, and put the shutters up. But don't go to bed till I come back—do you hear?"

"I hear, sir."

"Now then, Milford. Keep a stiff upper lip—or your wife'll blow you up."

"She never does," said Milford, as they plunged across the street. In a minute more they were standing in the little room from which Mat had started on his errand.

CHAPTER II.

SHADOWS ON THE HEARTH-STONE.

The three persons described in the last chapter did not remain long alone in the room. From the chamber of the sick girl, the door of which was ajar, glided forth the figure of the afflicted wife and mother. She cast one sharp glance at her husband—sharp in intelligence, but not severe in expression, and that brief look embodied a world of anxiety and care. Then, with a slight nod of recognition to the doctor, she advanced to Milford, and leaning her head on his shoulder, gasped out the words—"Husband! Bessie!" and burst into tears.

"Is she worse? Is she in pain?" asked Milford, slightly sobered by the exhibition of the poignant grief of his wife.

"She has almost done with suffering—she is sinking fast," said the poor woman, raising her head, and wiping her eyes. "Hush! Don't you hear her?"

A weak but sweet childish voice was heard at this moment, singing:

"The Lord my pasture shall prepare."

As the notes died away, Milford shook off the hand that rested on his shoulder.

"Let me go, wife!" he said, in a hoarse, quivering voice.

"Papa—mother, has papa come?" asked the sick child.

"Yes, darling, he is here?" said the stricken man; and he entered the sick room followed by his companions. Kneeling by the bedside, he laid his hot head upon the pillow, beside the beautiful face of the sick child, who lay there in a snow-white cap and night-gown, on a couch smoothed with the tenderest care.

The child took the man's hot, fevered hand, in her little thin delicate fingers.

"Don't cry, papa!" said she.

At that moment the clock in a neighboring church-tower began to strike. "One—two—three—four—five—six—seven—eight—nine—ten—eleven—twelve!" The child counted the strokes, keeping time with her tiny forefinger on her father's hand. A smile passed over her wan countenance.

"A happy new year!" said she. "Happy new year, father—happy new year, mother—and you, Mat, and you, doctor. O, I did so want to live to hear that clock strike twelve! I shall never hear it strike again!"

"Don't say so, Bessie," cried the agonized and stricken father. "Doctor, do you hear her? Do you hear what the child says? Do something for her."

The doctor shook his head.

"No, father, I'm going," said the child, faintly. "Good by. And, father, dear father—come nearer me—I don't want them to hear," she whispered. "When I am gone—don't go with the bad men any more. Comfort mother—and be kind to Mattie. Now, kiss me."

Milford, every fibre of his frame quivering with grief, pressed his lips on those of the dying child. She beckoned her mother and brother to her side, took their hands, pressed them to her heart, kissed them, and smiled—and her blue eyes looked love on theirs which were blinded with tears.

"The ground is cold where I shall be," she murmured. "But beautiful spring will come—though I shall never see it—and then, Mattie, dear—you must plant some flowers there—violets and roses—wont you?"

The boy could only press her hand.

"Hark!" said the child. "Don't you hear music?"

They listened, hearing only the gusts driving the wintry storm against the window panes—but little Bessie heard the soft voices of angels who waited to welcome her to a world of brightness and love. A sunny smile—like the reflection of the snowy plumes of angels, lighted up her blissful countenance, and with that expression on her sinless face, her spirit passed away. A smothered wail—such as comes only from a mother's heart, marked the catastrophe.

The doctor stole from the room, and left the house. Matthew, who could not bear to witness an agony he was impotent to console, left the chamber of death, closing the door behind him, and throwing himself into a chair, gave way to convulsive sobs. Some time passed—how long he knew not—for grief like joy takes no account of time, when his father entered and threw himself into a chair opposite. The hot tears had ceased to flow—and now his countenance wore an angry and forbidding expression. With clenched hands he smote his temples, or tore his hair, and vented his feelings in fierce imprecations.

"Why was I born!" he exclaimed. "Misfortune tracks me like a bloodhound. One by one—I have followed them to the grave, and now Bessie is gone—and I am hopeless."

Matthew ventured to approach his father, and place his trembling hand upon his arm.

"Father, I love you dearly," said the boy.

"You!" exclaimed Milford—glaring at him with his bloodshot eyes. "You! ha, ha! Come now—that is good—good! Away! I did not call you—I didn't speak to you—think of you."

Matthew shrank away abashed, and deeply wounded.

"My Bessie! my poor little Bessie!" cried Milford. "Give her back to me! Restore her! God in Heaven! Give me back my child!"

"Dear husband!" said Mrs. Milford, entering the room and taking her place beside the excited man. "God hath given, and God hath taken away."

"What are gifts that cannot be kept?" retorted Milford, furiously.

"Hush! hush!" said the poor woman. "This is harder to bear than all. I'm not book-larned as you be—I haven't your mind, I know—but I feel that our afflictions are mercies—that all is ordered for the best—and that God is good."

"So do not I feel," said Milford; "and so prate no more about it. Take your arm away—let me go in and see the child. She is not—she cannot be dead—I cannot spare her."

"Be calm, I implore you," said the wife. "Matthew, don't sit crying there. Go to bed, child, and try to sleep."

Matthew rose obediently, and received his mother's kiss. His father kissed him too, but coldly—and with a heavy heart he turned to go to his room.

"What have you got in that paper parcel, sir?" asked Milford.

"A little new year's present for sister," said the boy; "she wont want it now."

"Go—go, sir," said the father. "You'll kill me, among you."

When Matthew was gone, the wretched man sat, his face covered with his hands, sobbing convulsively. At last he started up.

"Where's my hat?" he cried. "Jane, where did I leave my hat?"

"You don't want it, Harvey," said his wife, firmly.

"I do—I do—I tell you. My hat! I have business out of doors."

"With whom?"

"With the undertaker."

"You will not find him at this hour. Sit down, Harvey. You shall not go out to-night again."

"Shall not, madam?"

"That was my word. You must stay here."

"Out of respect to you?"

"Out of respect to your dead," replied his wife, pointing to the door of the chamber.

Milford sank back into his chair. The words of his dying child recurred at that moment, and he was spell-bound to the spot.

Leaving the house of mourning, let us follow the footsteps of the worthy doctor. Crossing the street, he entered his shop and then locked the door behind him. His assistant was sitting up and awake, a circumstance which greatly displeased the doctor, for he had made up his mind that he should find the youth overcome by sleep, and had promised himself the cheap luxury of kicking him soundly. Jack eyed him very keenly and wistfully, but said nothing. The doctor passed behind the counter, took down a bottle, poured some of the contents, whatever they were, into an apothecary's glass, swallowed the dose and then replaced the vessel. Seating himself on a high stool, he placed his feet on the counter, folded his arms, and gazed vacantly on the opposite side of the shop.

"Please, sir," said the boy, timidly—"what's the news over the way?"

Doctor Biggin took no notice of the inquiry, but began whistling the Dead March in Saul. After he had concluded it, he treated himself to an encore, and executed it a second time in such a masterly manner, that he began again and went all through it.

"Doctor," said the boy, after this tedious operation had been followed by silence, "how is little Bessie?"

"Is the young gentleman addressing his conversation to me?" inquired the doctor, in a tone of mock politeness.

"Yes, sir, I spoke to you," stammered the boy.

"I crave your pardon, young gentleman—but I lost the purport of your remark."

"I ventured to ask you, sir, how little Bessie Milford was?"

"What the deuce do you care about Bessie Milford? Go to bed—boy—go to bed."

"Please, sir," said the boy, clasping his hands tightly together. "I do care about her. She's in my class at Sunday school."

"Sunday school!" echoed the doctor. "Sunday school?"

"Yes, sir, please," said the boy, trembling violently.

"So—that's where you go Sundays, is it?" said the doctor. "Upon my soul, young gentleman, you're a nice boy, I don't think. So, when I thought you were taking a little air and exercise—so as to fit you for the better discharge of your duties, tending the shop for you, and doing your work, confound you! you were shutting yourself up in the basement of the church, with that canting crew, singing psalms and reciting Bible lessons. What do you 'spose will become of you, for your black ingratitude? I don't want to hurt your feelings, but allow me to insinuate mildly that I consider you a viper—I do."

"A viper, sir!"

"Yes, sir, a viper—a reptile, which in attempting to injure its benefactor invariably bites a file. See Esop—I forgot—you've no time to read anything but the Dispensary."

"But, sir, my poor old grandmother's dying request was that I should go to Sunday school."

"Well, sir, what of that? what do you care about your grandmother? She's dead and gone, isn't she?"

"She is, sir."

"Very well, young gentleman, then there's not the slightest danger of her blowing you up for not attending to her orders. You obey mine, and that's all you've got to look after. And now the shop's shut up, you may go to bed."

"But, sir, you would do me a very great favor, if you would be so very kind as to tell me how Bessie is?"

"Well, young gentleman," said the doctor, "the young lady you are so very solicitous about, will attend no more Sunday schools, I can assure you."

"Dead!"

"Perfectly. And as decay, in a case like hers, follows rapidly on dissolution, she must be buried to morrow. Why, dash my wig! if the fellow isn't snivelling. None of that, sir—this is the wrong shop for such an exhibition. I don't allow crying in my establishment. Dry your eyes, and go to bed."

Poor Jack did his best to obey his master's order, and suppressed the display of his emotions so long as he was in the presence of that hard, bad man; but when he was alone in his little den, he gave a free vent to his tears.

Little did he sleep that night, and with the earliest streak of dawn in the east, he was up and dressed. Heavy as his heart was, he never performed his work with such alacrity, for he was actuated by a purpose that stimulated him to the most active exertion. He made a fire in the cast iron stove, and brought up a supply of wood for the entire day. Then he dusted the counter and swept the store, and cleaned the jars and bottles, and went to work upon the windows. As he was polishing off the last pane—(the shop had never looked so bright before, in fact, Doctor Biggin did not care to have it)—he couldn't help saying aloud to himself:

"Well, the doctor can't help being satisfied with me; I've begun the year well—and as I'm up betimes, I shall be the first to wish him a happy new year, and then he can't avoid giving me a trifle."

"Mr. Glossop, a happy new year to you," said a husky voice behind him.

Poor Jack turned, and stood there gazing at his master, with eyes and mouth open, the cloth with which he had been wiping the windows, dropping from his hand.

"Wish you a happy new year, Jack," repeated the doctor. "Mind, you owe me something. Now fly round, be sharp and wide awake—go to work, boy, go to work."

"I'm sure I wish *you* a happy new year, doctor," stammered the boy.

"I was first, though, eh?" said Biggin, punching him maliciously in the ribs. "Aint you glad of it—eh?" and the doctor, rubbing his hands, indulged in a dry chuckle.

"Please, sir," said the boy, trembling violently. "I'm going to venture to ask a favor of you."

"As many as you please, young gentleman," replied the doctor, continuing to rub his hands. "As many as you please. I don't say, I'll grant 'em though."

"But it will be a small thing for you to grant, sir—though a very great one for me to receive."

"Well, Jack," said the doctor, with a great affectation of kindness. "Out with it! you'll feel better when you've relieved your mind of it."

"Thank you kindly, sir. I want to ask you, sir, if you will be so very good as to give me sixpence?"

It was now the doctor's turn to stare. He held up both his hands in utter amazement. Then stooping down, and placing his hands on his knees, he brought his face so near to the boy's, that their foreheads almost touched, and exclaimed:

"A what?"

"A sixpence, sir," said the boy, with a violent effort.

The doctor slowly regained his perpendicularity and retreated to the opposite counter.

"Upon my [illegible] and [illegible]," he said, shaking his head. "Upon my soul and veracity, I never heard of such a thing! A sixpence! *Money!* from *me* to *you!* And what—I should like to know—admitting that I was insane enough to give you what you ask—what would you do with it?"

The boy shook his head. "I can't tell, sir."

"No, I should think not," said the doctor. "I should rather think not. Here you are—located in an elegant establishment—surrounded by the costliest drugs—having before your eyes jars of the most expensive leeches—your taste for art cultivated by the daily contemplation of the elegant gilt scrollwork and lettering on the drawers and bottles, agreeable perfumes, like those of Arabia Felix pervading the atmosphere, your board and lodging furnished you, to say nothing of your clothes—free access to epsom salts, castor oil, ipecac and antimony when you are unwell—here you are, I say, in a splendid establishment, with a kind, good master—the envy of all the boys in the neighborhood—a splendid position for an orphan—on the road to knowledge if not to fortune; and you ask for money? Upon my soul, young gentleman, I should have a right to be indignant at your impudence, whereas I am only amazed at your folly."

"Please, sir, I meant no harm."

"Possibly not. I am willing to presume you erred through ignorance. Do you know what money is?"

"How should I, sir? I never had any."

"Money, my dear young gentleman," pursued the doctor, in a moralizing vein, "except to the few who know how to make a good use of it—as myself, for example—is a positive evil. Philosophers have told us it was the root of it. I favor the opinion—and never, Jack—no, never, so long as we are associated, will I corrupt your morals by giving you a single cent. Give me your hand, Jack. I'm your friend—your dear good friend, and you shall never charge me with doing you an injury."

"Very well, sir," said the boy, with a sigh. "You know best."

"Of course I do, Jack—of course I do."

"One other favor, sir, I have to ask, since you have refused that."

"Ask away, Jack—ask away."

"Would you be so kind as to give me leave of absence for half an hour, sir, this morning—and also permission to attend the—the funeral this afternoon?"

"No—Jack, no," replied the doctor, cheerfully. "Time is money, Jack. And the principle is the same in refusing the leave and the sixpence. And now run out in the street and see what time it is by the clock."

The boy did as he was requested, and reported ten minutes to eight.

"Bless my soul! It's breakfast time!" said the doctor. "Have you got any bread and cheese left?"

"Yes, sir—there's half a small loaf of bread, and a slice of cheese."

"Well, while I'm away, you can eat your breakfast—and think of the poor houseless orphans while you're eating it, Jack. Remember that Providence blesses the grateful heart. And harkee—remember you owe me sixpence for wishing you a happy new year. I'll work it out of you some way. Now you can make yourself some mint tea in the shaving pot—but don't use more than a teaspoonful of mint. Strong drinks undermine the constitution. And mind—if anybody wants to see me very particularly, I'm to be found at the Cat and Mastiff. But don't disturb me on frivolous pretences. I sha'n't be back for an hour—for I'm going to treat myself to an extra good breakfast."

"Wonder if Dr. Biggin is a good man!" thought poor Jack, when he was left alone. "I suppose he is—and I suppose I'm wicked and ungrateful. And I suppose something dreadful will happen to me for what I'm going to do—but if I'm hung for it, if I forfeit the regard of all respectable people—I'm bound to quit the shop for half an hour, leave or no leave."

As he came to this conclusion, the boy went out on the sidewalk, turned the key in the door, put it in his pocket and vanished in the opposite direction to that which the apothecary had taken.

CHAPTER III.

THE WHITE ROSE.

WALKING very swiftly and looking frequently behind him, as if fearful of being pursued, the apothecary's boy turned into a side street, and at a short distance from the corner, halted at a gate in a high board fence. Finding it unlocked, he lifted the latch, and entering a small yard, came to the door of a little green-house, the interior of which also proved accessible, though the door was usually locked.

Passionately fond of flowers, the sight of a mass of them, many in full bloom, filling the air with a sweet perfume, would have diverted his thoughts from the deep sorrow at his heart, if his grief had not been intimately associated with the purpose of his visit. As it was, he glanced along the tiers of plants with a woe-begone air. No one was in sight, and he wandered from stand to stand, inhaling the rich perfumes and occasionally pausing to examine a particularly beautiful flower. As he stood thus, not presuming to touch even a leaf, for he was awed by the luxuriance of nature, a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and a hollow voice murmured in his ear:

"An 'appy new year to you."

"Thank you, Mr. Laddle," said poor Jack, turning and recognizing the English gardener, who was proprietor of the little green-house, and lived by its products. "I am sure I wish you a happy new year and many an another one!"

"Thanks! thanks!" said the gardener, with a wave of his gnarly red knuckles. "'Tis no use, though. 'Appiness, my young friend, never comes by wishing on it."

And he sat down gloomily on a porcelain garden seat, inviting his visitor to do the same.

Mr. Rufus Laddle was a short, roundish little man, with a red face, turn[illegible]p nose and carroty hair—the last person in the [illegible] would have suspected of sentimentality. He was quite an illiterate man, though possessed of great practical skill, and it was questionable whether he ever knew or remembered the scientific name of any one of the many plants and shrubs he reared so successuflly. But he was not without ingenuity, and was famous for inventing "bogus" Latin names, to designate his charges, which he pronounced with admirable assurance in the presence of those whom he supposed to be ignorant of a classical education. It is doubtful whether he was ever "'ead gardener to the Juke of Devonshire," though his advertisements claimed that honor. He may have been a laborer at Chatsworth previous to his immigration.

"I should think," said Jack, timidly, "that you could not be otherwise than happy, surrounded by so many charming plants."

Mr. Laddle shook his head mournfully—an operation that made him redder than ever in the face.

"Flowers is full of disappointments," said he—"wexations, as for instance, Hafiz—wulgar plant-louse. To say nothing of red spiders—*carmineus wociferus*. Insex is numerous—I may say prevalent," said Mr. Laddle, oracularly. "Besides," he continued, "'appiness is not houtward but hinward. Misery is like the borer—*internus hypersolutus*—vich penetrates unseen—and ven you flatter yourself your bush vill be covered vith fruit, it dies and cumbers the ground—a moniment of blighted 'opes, not to say blasted, which is wulgar."

"I always thought you a happy man," said Jack, wonderingly.

"Deception," said Mr. Laddle. "Who is 'appy in this wale of tears? I goes about my occupation mekanikly—a sort of a horticultural hortomiton. I've seed moments in this here werry green'ouse ven I could er heaten hivy by the 'anful—and hivy's rank pison. 'Enbane 'as 'ad temptations for me it vould be superfluous to speak of."

"You alarm me," said Jack.

"Fact," said the gardener. "Vait till you're forty years old, and you'll know summat of life, young man. You'll vitness domestic dramas in von hact of that 'ere 'arrowing character that if they vos put on the stage they'd draw full 'ouses for a fortnight."

"Then you have indeed cause for your sorrow."

"Told in von vord," said the gloomy gardener; "voman. May *you* never 'ave cause to 'nathematize the sects!"

There was a moment's silence, when Mr. Laddle resumed, drawing the sort of overgrown flower-pot on which he sat nearer to his listener.

"I vas engaged to be married to a young lady of London vich vas a ballet-dancer at the Surry. On the werry day app'inted for the marriage—arter the special license had been obtained—she eloped—ewaporated—ran off vith a von-eyed fiddler, and left me like the last rose of summer vich vas left veeping alone under similar circumstances. Strychnine and hemigration occurred to me simultaneously. I hadopted the latter halternative and 'ere I am—vot's left of me."

Jack listened with an attention that flattered the orator.

"My feelinks, Mr. Glossop," said Mr. Laddle, "ven I am perfessionally engaged, is sometimes overpowerink. Fancy me—*me!*—culling a horange flower for the 'air of a bride! O, Mary Hann! if you could look into this lancerated 'art on the pint of bustin' vith suppressed emotion—yours vould melt, hall marble though it be! Pardon me, young gentleman—I 'ave no vish to darken your young path vith a hexibition of the funereal skellingtons vich people mine!" Mr. Laddle had not been a patron of the Surry for nothing. "And permit me," he concluded, courteously, "to thank you for a visit on this hanniversary, to the lonely 'ermit vich addresses you!"

As he made an end of his oration, a jarring sound in the vicinity of the green-house arrested the attention of the "lonely 'ermit," and he held up a warning finger.

"What's that?" asked the apothecary's boy.

"It's my neighbor Chudly, the undertaker and coffin-maker, 'urrying to finish a job. 'E's making a coffin for a little girl as died of scarlet fever yesterday, and is to be buried to-day—a flower cut down in the bud!"

"Poor Bessie!" said the boy, as the strokes of the hammer fell upon his ear. "Dear Mr. Laddle," he said, "I have come to ask a favor of you."

"Hanythink in reason," said the gardener.

"That little girl was a schoolmate of mine," continued the boy, falteringly. "And I thought—I thought—dear Mr. Laddle, that perhaps you would be so very good as to give me one white rose to place upon her bosom as she lies in her little coffin."

Mr. Laddle dropped the sentimental tone at once.

"Umph!" said he, eyeing the lad. "*Give* you a rose! White roses are in great demand just now, and I 'ave precious few of 'em. But seeing that it's you, Jack, if you'll fork me over a quarter of a dollar, hi'll cut von for you."

"Alas, sir, I have no money!" said Jack.

"Drat the boy!" muttered the gardener. "Vot he comes 'ere for then, vithout the ready rhino—ven he knows I dŏ a cash business! Look 'ere," he said, addressing the anxious lad, "if you'll promise, on your vord and honor, to fetch me the first money you can collar—it's a bargain."

"I will do so," said the boy, earnestly, "though Heaven knows when I can pay you."

Mr. Laddle hereupon produced a pair of scissors, and cut off a white rose which he presented to the boy, who placed it carefully in his hat.

"I shall never forget this kindness," said he, gratefully.

"See you don't!" muttered the gardener, sourly, as he hurried Jack away and closed the door of the green-house.

From the gardener Jack turned to the undertaker with his prize.

"Please, sir," said he to the portly Mr. Chudly, who opened the door for him, "will you place this flower in Bessie's coffin?"

"Ay—will I, young man," said the undertaker, cheerily. "It'll have a very pretty effect—a very pretty, cheerful effect—'specially as it's winter, and flowers skerse. Wont you come in and take a look round the establishment?"

"I thank you, sir," said Jack, with a shudder, "but I must be back to Dr. Biggin's."

"Very good, then," said Chudly. "Present the compliments of the season to him, in my name. The doctor is a good friend of mine—a *very* good friend, I may say! Ha! ha! when they send for him, it's as good as booked that they'll send for me soon after. Eh, Jack? you understand. I tell Mrs. C. he's my partner—eh, Jack? Ah, he's a sure hand—no hanging fire about the doctor! You wont come in, then? Fine weather yesterday—remarkably unhealthy. Good morning!"

Jack hurried back as fast as his feet could carry him to the apothecary's, for he had been detained longer than he anticipated by the garrulity of the gloomy gardener. Still, whatever might be the result, he had accomplished his mission. His worst anticipations were realized when he reached the store. There stood Dr. Biggin waiting on the sidewalk! But the doctor was calm—there was no external sign of irritation about him, except a little twinkle in his eye, like that of a vicious old horse too cunning to switch his tail, yet making up his mind to kick, and only waiting to see where he can most effectually plant his heels.

The doctor raised his hat as courteously as if he were saluting the governor of the State.

"This is Dr. Biggin's establishment, is it not, young gentleman?" he asked, blandly.

"Certainly—sir," stammered poor Jack.

"And you are his assistant, if I am not mistaken?"

"O, doctor, pray forgive me, please!"

"Confound you, you young scoundrel!" roared the doctor, changing his manner. "If you don't unlock that door in a flash, I'll throw you through the window! Do you know, you villain, that the thermometer's six below? Open the door, you shabby skeleton—you've made me the laughing-stock of the street, you have!"

Jack opened the door and precipitated himself into the shop, followed by his benevolent employer, who had washed down his breakfast with more than one dram at the Cat and Mastiff, and whose amiable nature was therefore expanding in full bloom.

Catching up a pound weight, he exclaimed:

"Stand still, while I take a shy at your ugly countenance, you reprobate."

"I have deserved it," faltered the boy, as he dropped his arms, and stood leaning against the counter, pale but resigned.

There was something so helpless in his attitude and manner that even Dr. Biggin could not find it in his hard heart to execute his threat. He dropped the weight into the scales and approaching the lad, stooped down so as to bring his countenance on a level with Jack's, and glared into his eyes with the expression of a maudlin hyena.

"You're a fool!" said the doctor. "You don't know on which side your bread's buttered. Mark me! Like a soft-hearted old booby as I am, I had made up my mind, as a New Year's treat for you, to allow you to go to the funeral, this afternoon. I hastened back—your good kind master hastened back, impairing his digestion—to inform you of his purpose; hastened back to find himself locked out of his own shop. Now, sir, no funeral for you! Go to work, dog—go to work. There's the decoction of quassia—and the water to be filtered, and a hundred boxes of Biggin's Vade Mecum Pills to be put up and labelled. Now be alive and wide awake, or I'll be after you with a sharp stick!"

Wearily—wearily—all day long, poor Jack Glossop labored at his various tasks. Though left alone a great portion of the day, he did not relax his exertions, for strange to say, in his humility and his ignorance of the world, he actually believed that he was laboring under a deep debt of gratitude to the doctor. He was an orphan; he had been received, lodged and fed—how, it mattered not, but he had enough to keep soul and body together, and he was under the impression that, if left to his own resources, he should starve. He had no idea of the field open to industry, probity and resolution in this favored land. The doctor had artfully inculcated these views, and Jack never thought of disputing his opinions. So, although nature sometimes rebelled in his heart against the iron rule to which he was subjected, he believed the doctor acted for the best with regard to him, and in spite of the man's infirmities of temper and conduct, even loved him! Had Dr. Biggin imagined that in the wide world there was a single being who could love him, he might have behaved differently. But poor Jack knew not how to express his feelings except by his diligence, and that the doctor attributed to the effect of fear.

We have said that on this particular day the apothecary's boy labored assiduously at his various tasks. There was one portion of it, however, on which he ceased working. Sitting at the window, he gazed mournfully over the way, where the street was darkened by the presence of a hearse and mourning carriages. Idlers stood on the sidewalk of the opposite house, where a little coffin was borne forth and slid away among the black curtains of the hearse. Then came forth, shrouded in deep black and bowed with grief, a broken-hearted woman, who tottered as she leaned for support on the strong arm of her husband. A young lad entered the carriage with them. A few friends of both sexes took their seats as other carriages were driven up to the house of mourning, and then the said cortege passed away. Good-by, little Bessie! The snow has been scooped away, and the hard gravel excavated for your resting-place; but another angel has been added to the heavenly host, and another sweet voice mingles with the vast choir that chant the glory and goodness of God on high forever and forever.

As the dark hearse and mourning carriage moved out of the street, the sunbeams played merrily on the crisp snow they had lately shaded; but the very sunshine looked dark in the eyes of the watcher at the window. How long he sat in [illegible] note of time; but he was aroused at last by the opening of the shop-door, to which a bell was attached, and he looked up quickly as he heard the jingling alarum. It was not, however, Dr. Biggin, as he found, but Mat Milford.

"It is all over, Jack," said the boy. "Poor little Bessie is buried under the snow!"

Jack grasped his hand. "I couldn't be with you, Matthew—though I wanted to so."

"How beautifully she looked!" said Matthew. "And the white rose in her folded hands!"

"Was my poor white rose there?" asked Jack.

"Yours!" exclaimed Mat. "Did you send that flower, Jack? I shouldn't have thought it."

"Nobody thinks poor Jack Glossop has any heart!" said the apothecary's boy.

"Jack, my poor fellow," said Mat, taking his hand, "I didn't mean to hurt your feelings. But you seem such an odd kind of person; you lead so lonely a life here that—never mind! I shall learn to know you better; and I'll come over and see you oftener; and I'm sure God will bless you for your thoughtful tribute to my poor little sister."

Jack was so unused to appreciation and to kind words that he was moved to tears. He shook the proffered hand of his young acquaintance warmly, and was loath to let it go.

"Jack," said Mat, leaning on the counter, "I have some news to tell you that would have made me glad if I'd heard it at any other time. The Rev. Mr. Mildmay, the rector of St. Anne's Church, a scholar, you know, educated at Oxford, England, who keeps a first-rate classical school, has offered to give me my tuition, and has persuaded my father to spare me from the store during school hours. He's going to teach me Greek and Latin, and ever so many things. How it would have rejoiced my poor sister if she could have known it! But God's will be done! She's in a better world; and we know, Jack, how many hard rubs there are in this!"

Jack sighed. He was beginning to have instinctive perceptions of another world than that bounded by the four walls of a drug store. He almost envied his acquaintance the good fortune that had befallen him; but he checked the shadowy feeling promptly, for his nature was too pure to harbor so base a guest as envy. He warmly congratulated Mat on his good fortune, uttered awkwardly some words of consolation that failed to express his genuine sympathies, and then Mat left for his sorrow-stricken home, while Jack resumed his varied and uninteresting duties.

CHAPTER IV.

AN EVENTFUL DAY.

IT is not our purpose to trace, step by step, the mental progress of Mat Milford. Suffice it to say, his talents were rapidly developed during the period of four years which he passed at Mr. Mildmay's school, and that at the expiration of that term he was fitted to enter any American university. Out of school, he had also employed his opportunities diligently; he had studied more than one of the modern European languages, and had read many volumes of history, biography, science and travel. Moreover, he

had cultivated a decided talent for prose and poetical composition. Indeed, he had filled quires with his lucubrations, while some of his minor lyrics, published anonymously in the city journals, had attracted a good deal of attention. He had also dabbled in theatrical criticism, and this had secured him the entree of the theatre—a source of infinite delight. It was well for him that his time and mind were so occupied; for his spirit would certainly have been crushed had he dwelt upon the domestic incidents by which he was surrounded.

Harvey Milford was recklessly pursuing a downward career. He neglected his business, and frequently absented himself from his store the entire day. To gratify a perpetual thirst by perpetual libations, and to be the oracle of a low bar-room, seemed the height of his ambition. His poor wife, in addition to her household duties, was compelled to attend to the counter, and when the long, dreary day, crowded with business, had closed, she had not the slave's privilege of retiring to bed, but was compelled to sit up often till after midnight to serve supper to her truant husband, and see him safely bestowed for the night.

It might be thought that there would be times when the conscience of the reveller would have smitten him for the burthens he threw upon the shoulders of his meek, uncomplaining partner. But no! his estimate of woman was that of an Indian chief's: it was her duty to toil—that of a man to enjoy. Besides, he looked down upon her from the height of his lordly self-conceit because she was illiterate, "a very inferior person," as he often assured her, while he himself was a "born gentleman," a "member of one of the first families," who had degraded himself by a misalliance. The poor woman accepted her position with due humility (strong-minded women had not been invented in the days of which we write), and disclaiming all merit for herself, even that of beauty, which was the sole quality that had won the hand of the "born gentleman," and which was now fading fast under the pressure of cares. She was proud of his style, of his acquirements, of his family—though none of its representatives had ever been to see her, and though no one knew where they were or who they were.

For a long time the store had been kept going solely by the exertions of Mrs. Milford, yet the head of the house claimed all the credit to himself.

"My wife, doctor," he would say to his crony, Biggin, as he lolled back in his arm-chair at the Cat and Mastiff, "is a good honest soul, but," tapping his forehead, "no head—you understand me. Bless you, doctor, she never originated a single idea. She has no idea of the markets or the course of trade. She's a good saleswoman and housekeeper, but that's all. I wish you could see the bills she makes out! No early advantages—as I had—poor woman!"

"Now," the doctor would answer, "it's something to have somebody to tend the shop, and give one a chance to slip off now and then."

"O, of course—I appreciate that."

"Now there's that rascal, Jack. Egad, Harvey, that fellow would no more leave the shop when I'm away than he'd jump out of a four-story window. That Perkins affair gave him a big scare, I can tell you. He fancies if I were to discard him, he'd starve! He's cheap, I tell you. Simple as a gosling. I don't believe the fellow knows he'll be soon of age—and his own master. But out of his time or not, I shall keep my thumb on him."

Such was the frequent tone of the conversations of these worthy gentlemen.

But to return to Matthew. The day came on which he was to take leave of his teacher and his school-fellows. In the exercises of the exhibition day which closed the term, the Latin valedictory was assigned to him. He had spent some time in its preparation, and it had met the approval of Mr. Mildmay, after being subjected to a careful and rigid examination. As the school was in high repute, a brilliant and distinguished audience was looked for. Mrs. Milford, by incredible exertions, had procured a neat and tasteful suit for her darling, and when, after tenderly kissing her, he left the house early on the morning of the great day, her heart swelled within her as she watched his figure, prematurely developed for his age, receding up the street.

"He'll be a shinin' light one of these days," thought she, as she turned back into the store.

Her bonnet and shawl were lying on the counter, and these attracted the attention of her husband, who at that moment chanced to enter from the back door.

"Going to market, Jane?" he asked. "Look sharp, and get something nice for my dinner; my appetite's rather delicate of late."

"No, my dear—I have been to market; but I thought, by-and-by, if you'd tend the shop a little while, I'd run over to Mat's school."

"What for?" asked Mr. Milford, raising his eyebrows.

"To hear Mat speak his piece. They say it'll be a real good one—he's took a heap of pains with it."

"Why, you goose!" said the "born gentleman," "it's in Latin, and you don't even understand the vernacular."

"What's that, Harvey?"

"Your own mother tongue."

"I know it," said the wife, blushing. "But that don't prevent my hearin' his pleasant voice, and seein' the color mount to his cheek, and hearin' the folks stamp and applaud the dear boy."

"Nonsense!" said the "born gentleman." "It's no use at all your going. Whereas it would be a treat to me; for I haven't forgotten my classical studies, for all I'm a beggarly two-penny shop-keeper."

"O, if you're going, Harvey, I'll cheerfully give it up."

"Well, I *am* going," said Milford; "and perhaps the doctor will go with me."

"'Pears to me, I wouldn't ask him," said the wife, anxiously.

"And why not?" asked Milford, gruffly.

"I don't think no good comes of his company. Dear husband—I'm afeard of his leading you away," she said, tearfully.

"Jane, you're a fool!" replied the "born gentleman." "Do you suppose I'm a child—that I don't know how to take care of myself? You attend to your business, and I'll attend to mine. Look to the shop while I'm gone—and to the dinner. Yesterday the soup was so burned that I couldn't swallow a mouthful."

"It sha'n't be so again," said the woman, earnestly.

"If it is," growled Harvey, "I shall know where to get meals that wont poison me." And with this threat, he stalked loftily across the street.

Meanwhile Mr. Mildmay's school-room had been filling up with pleasant faces. There were clergymen, merchants, men of letters, the parents, brothers, sisters, and other relatives of the pupils, comprising the *elite* of the town society.

The Rev. Mr. Mildmay looked proud and happy, and his pupils all bright and cheerful. Mat was conspicuous, occupying the post of honor on the highest form. The examination by a committee of distinguished scholars commenced. They did not propound a series of pre-arranged questions, but had been invited to subject the acquirements of the pupils to a rigid and honest test. When Mat rose to answer the first question put to him, his eye glanced over the auditory in quest of his mother's handsome but careworn face, and a shade of disappointment passed over his own when he failed to detect it.

But his faculties were soon almost entirely engrossed by the necessity of replying to the examiners, and he forgot everything else. The examination lasted more than three hours, and resulted creditably to the pupils and their teacher. The chairman of the committee complimented both warmly and eloquently, and the applause of the audience ratified his judgment. Then commenced the oratorical exercises. All spoke well—for they had been all equally well-trained;—but Matthew Milford's address, an eloquently written production, betrayed a native eloquence beyond the reach of art. Even those—and there were many—who had no knowledge of the language he spoke, divined its meaning from the play of his features, the expression of his gestures, and the full melody of his modulated voice. When he bowed and left the stage, the hall rang and re-echoed with prolonged applause.

And now came the closing scene—the distribution of the prizes. The awards were looked for breathlessly by many an anxious member of that little society. But when the first prize for scholarship, and the first prize for good conduct, and the first prize for declamation were all awarded to Matthew Milford, and he stepped forward to receive the three medals, the warmest applause was bestowed on him. For a moment he felt a thrill of inexpressible rapture—his first draught of the cup of renown; and then it was dashed from his lips to the ground suddenly and terribly!

A loud, discordant voice, long after the applause had subsided, shouted "Hurraw! Bravo, Mat! Bravo!"

"Hush! hush!" said a husky voice, "don't make a fool of yourself!"

"Hush!" "Silence!" "Shame!" "Shame!" cried other voices.

Mat stood upon the stage, the medals in his hand, blushing crimson to the temples, and quivering with agony. In the first voice, discordant and unnatural as it was, he recognized his father's tones, and the recognition thrilled his heart as if a keen, barbed arrow had pierced it.

"I wont hush!" said the terrible voice again. "I must shake hands with my boy. Let me go, doctor!"

And Harvey Milford, his face flaming scarlet, his eyes bloodshot, intoxicated at that early hour of the day, forced his way, staggering, through the crowd of indignant gentlemen and terrified ladies, towards the stage. But here he stumbled and fell sprawling, striking his head against the edge of the platform, and inflicting a slight flesh wound, from which the heated blood spurted forth. Matthew sprang from the stage, and rejecting all offers of assistance, raised his father to his feet, and with the aid of Dr. Biggin, conveyed him out of the room, the doctor making himself ridiculous by muttering, as he passed through the dividing groups, "It's nothing, ladies and gentlemen—overcome by his emotions of pride—sensitive nature—he'll be all right in the open air."

A gentleman who followed them out into the entry advised sending for a carriage, but Matthew rejected the offer. His only idea was to get the unhappy man home and to bed as speedily as possible, and with the least possible exposure. So he and the apothecary, supporting the nearly senseless man between them, hurried him through the street, much to the delight of some base vagabond boys, who followed hooting and uttering derisive cries.

Arrived at Milford's door, Biggin, remarking, "I'm off—your mother'll say I led him away," suddenly deserted. Matthew alone, exerting all his strength, got his father up-stairs and to-bed. He had hoped, vainly, to conceal the occurrence for a time from his mother's knowledge; but some evil tongue had already informed her, and she came flying up-stairs in an agony of grief. Mother and son mingled their tears over the now unconscious cause of their grief and shame, who was buried in the heavy, loathsome stupor of intoxication.

Heavily wore on that mournful day. The mother and son, leaving the drunkard to his slumbers, sat together in the shop for hours, scarcely speaking a word. Their hearts were quite too full for utterance. The evening paper contained an account of the exhibition. Mrs. Milford and Matthew snatched it hastily to see if the disgraceful occurrence which had terminated it had been alluded to, and satisfied that it was not, dropped it listlessly, without having the heart to peruse the lines that recorded the triumph of the young scholar.

Towards evening, a hard-favored man of about fifty, dressed in a suit of iron gray, entered the store. He moved directly towards Mrs. Milford.

"Is your husband in, ma'am?" he asked, in a stern, brief tone.

"He is not," repeated the poor woman, blushing at the unwonted falsehood. "Is it any business I can attend to for him?"

"I fancy not," replied the man, drily, "unless you happen to have a thousand dollars by you."

"A thousand dollars!"

"*Plus* six months interest," said the stranger. "The note is over-due. Tell Mr. Harvey Milford, if you *please*, ma'am, that Mr.—he knows who, well enough—called with *that note*. Tell him it will be presented for the last time to-morrow morning at eight o'clock, and that if it's unpaid then, I shall look to the endorser. Remember, to-morrow morning, at eight."

"What can this mean?" said Mrs. Milford, in alarm, when the stranger had left the store. "A thousand dollars! Why, Matthew, this is ruin!"

Before the boy could make any reply or comment, a third person appeared on the scene. It was Milford himself, comparatively sobered by sleep, but still laboring under a high excitement. He broke out with an oath, followed by a laugh.

"To-morrow morning at eight, say you? Good!—good again!"

"But have you the money to meet this payment?" asked his wife, anxiously.

"Is a thousand dollars such a terrible amount, my darling?" asked Milford. "I have handled more money in my day than twenty times that sum, I fancy. And look here! What's this?"

He tore a wallet out of his breast-pocket, and showing it full of bank bills, restored it to its place.

"Not quite wound up yet, Jane! Eh? The poor house not quite next door! Eh? Leave me alone for making my way. I'm not so green as you think me! And now I must leave you for a time; I'm going out a little way."

"Stop! father," said Matthew, springing over the counter, and placing himself in the passage-way. "You shall not go out again to-night."

"Shall not!" exclaimed Milford, angrily. "Shall not! Stand aside, you whelp! Dare to impede my passage, and I'll show you what it is for a boy like you to beard a parent."

"O, pray, don't anger your father, Matthew," said the poor, timid wife. "You know you have no right to thwart him!"

"I have a right," replied the boy fiercely. "A right earned by my bitter agony—a right acquired when he drove the iron into my soul this day—when he disgraced himself and us in the presence of my teacher and my schoolmates, and the foremost men of the city."

"None of your school spouting here!" thundered Milford. "You ill-bred cur! stand back and let me pass!"

"You shall not go out to imbrute yourself again!" said the boy, seizing the collar of his father's coat. "So help me God! You shall not."

"Threats!—and from you!" shouted Milford. "Take that! and that!" And striking the lad two heavy blows, dealt with stunning force, the wretched man, thus liberated, sprang through the doorway and was gone.

When Matthew recovered his senses, he found himself lying on a sofa, with his mother bending over him. She was weeping bitterly.

"Don't cry, mother," said the lad, "or you'll break my heart. Father will be sorry for having hurt me when he comes to himself; and perhaps, after the disgrace, he'll be led to reason, and reflect, and do better by himself and by us."

"God grant he may, darling!" said the poor woman, but in a tone of despondency. "And now you'd better try and take some supper—it'll make you feel better."

The boy sat up and took the proffered refreshment. "I feel nicely now," he forced himself to say. "And now what had I better do? Had I better go to that dreadful haunt, and try to get father to come home with me?"

"It will be no use. He will come in his own time—as he has done hundreds of times before."

"Then you go to-bed, mother, and I'll sit up for him."

"No, Matthew; I know my duty and my place. I couldn't sleep if I went to bed. But you go—if you want to make me happy—and before you close your eyes, pray for your poor father."

Matthew kissed her silently, for his heart was too full for utterance, and then, taking his bed candle, glided out of the room.

Wrapping a shawl around her and leaning back in the rocking-chair, the lonely woman prepared for her accustomed vigil. The weary minutes and hours passed slowly away—the sounds of footsteps ceased in the street, but still the expected footstep came not. The tongue of the old clock tower hard by struck the hour of twelve. He came not. Another hour crawled away. The first hour of the morning struck: he came not. She started up—she could endure it no longer, but throwing on a bonnet hastened to the Cat and Mastiff to inquire after her husband. All in vain was her search—she could only trace him up to about ten o'clock that night, when the landlord declared that he left the tavern alone, to go on some errand known only to himself. Still the anxious and trembling wife sought for him until exhausted nature compelled her to sink down upon the rough floor of her shop.

At eight o'clock precisely, the hard-favored individual who had made his first appearance on the preceding evening, entered the store, touched his hat, and saying, in explanation, "Mr. Griffin," sat down on a stool, without waiting for an invitation to do so.

There was an uneasy pause of a few moments which the visitor occupied in scanning the shelves and counters, as if he were taking a mental inventory and valuation of the stock on hand. When he had concluded his survey, he pulled up a heavy gold hunting-cased watch from the depths of his pocket, and, pressing a spring and consulting the dial, said, curtly:

"Quarter past eight: time for business. Now, ma'am, I must see your husband."

"I am sorry to say, sir, you cannot see him."

"I rather fancy," said the stranger, rising, "that I shall find a way to get at him."

"I wish I knew where you could find him, sir," said Mrs. Milford. "But I have not seen him since last evening. He went out at that time and has not since returned."

"What time was it when he left here, ma'am?" asked Mr. Griffin.

"It was just eight o'clock, sir."

"Then he was here when you denied him to me!" said the stranger. "I see it all. He didn't mean to come back here, and he didn't mean to pay that note. But," he added, suddenly, changing his tone from one of asperity to an accent of great blandness. "Perhaps I am doing him injustice. Perhaps he has left the small amount I called to collect with you?"

"He left neither money nor message for you, sir."

"Very well, ma'am, very well!" said Mr. Griffin, rising, and buttoning his coat to the throat. "I shan't suffer, I assure you—I took good care to get a good name on his paper before I advanced him the money. His credit was shaky when I did so. I wish you a very good morning, ma'am, and a happy return of your estimable husband."

With these words, Mr. Griffin strode out of the store, slamming the door after him with a bang that jarred all the crockery on the shelves.

The mother and son now took earnest counsel together as to what they should do, but before they had arrived at any conclusion the store bell jingled its shrill alarm, and Griffin came back, in a state of the wildest excitement, followed by the apothecary, scarcely less agitated.

"See to the door, Biggin," said the former. "You mount guard there till the officer arrives."

"The officer!" said Mrs. Milford, trembling violently.

"Yes, madam, we live in a land of law—a land where an honest man is not allowed to be swindled out of his property with impunity. I understand the law (it is, or rather was my profession), and my rights too—and I'll have justice, if it cost me my whole fortune."

"Explain yourself, sir," said Matthew, advancing.

"That's soon done, young man," said Griffin, flourishing a scrap of paper before the eyes of mother and son. "Do you recognize that signature, sir?" added the money-lender, thrusting the scrap before the face of the lad.

"It is my father's," replied Matthew.

"No mistake about that," said Griffin. "And that?" he asked, turning the paper.

"Is Dr. Biggin's, sir."

"It's a lie!" shouted the doctor. "On the day that note was dated, Harvey Milford applied to me for the use of my name—and I refused him. Who that knows me would suspect me of endorsing a drunkard's paper?"

"What does all this mean?" asked Mrs. Milford, trembling and aghast.

"It means," said Griffin, fiercely, "that your husband is a *forger!*"

With a piteous shriek, the unhappy woman sank senseless to the floor.

"You have killed my mother!" said Matthew, fiercely, as he knelt down, and sought to revive the suffering and stricken woman.

At that moment the door opened, and a man, roughly dressed, pushed his way into the store.

Griffin turned upon the apothecary with a savage snarl. "I ordered you to look to that door, didn't I?" said he. "And who are you, fellow?"

"As good a man as you," said the new-comer, bristling up.

"You'd ought to know him, Mr. Griffin," said Laddle, the gardener, who had followed the stranger in. "It's Mr. Meechly, as takes toll on the Charlestown bridge."

"Well, what does he want here?" asked the money-lender.

"Nothing with you—I had something to say about Milford."

"Nothing with me! It's everything, I tell you," said Griffin. "Milford is my property—or rather, he belongs to the law which he has outraged."

"The law, though it has long claws, wont never reach him, I reckon," said the tollman.

"Ha! what's become of him?" cried Griffin. "Speak out, if you have good or bad news to communicate?"

"No! don't speak out," said Matthew, springing to his feet, and pointing to his mother. "She hears you."

"Yes—yes," said Mrs. Milford, rising, and staggering towards Meechly. "Whatever you have to tell, tell it at once. Suspense would kill me—I can bear anything but that."

Thus addressed, the tollman in an agitated voice, said: "I found this on the bridge near the draw this morning."

He extended a hat, with a crape on it. Mrs. Milford recognized it as her husband's.

"It is his," she whispered, faintly—"his—but—but was this all?"

"There was a letter, too," said the man, reluctantly. He extended the document, which the poor wife snatched at with convulsive eagerness. She opened—and read it—read it in a low tone, but every whisper of that agitated voice was audible to the group gathered about her, and breathlessly silent.

"DEAREST JANE:" So ran the lines. "Long before these words reach you, your wretched husband will have ceased to be the torment of your life. Don't let them say that I was mad or drunk when I took the fatal plunge. I am neither. But I dared not face the ruin I had wrought. The money I had raked together, though a large sum was a mere drop to our indebtedness. That harpy Griffin's claim would have swept up all. For the chance of trebling it, I sought the gaming-table—where I had often been before—staked and lost all. And the money was not mine. God help you—I cannot. Farewell—farewell, forever!"

The letter dropped from her hand. Pale and cold as marble, but speechless and tearless, she stood there, freezing the spectators with her aspect of unutterable woe. The sight of her despair hushed in awe and sympathy all but one man—a man who loved his money above all earthly and immortal things. One whose heart and soul were possessed by the *fiend of gold!*

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE WIFE.

She who ne'er answers till a husband cools,
Or, if she rules him, never shows she rules;
Charms by accepting, by submitting sways,
Yet has her humor most, when she obeys.—*Pope.*

JONATHAN AND JEMIMA.

Polly Peablesome might have been the name of a very pretty Green Mountain girl at work in one of our Lowell mills, and Hezekiah Winkle the name of a rough specimen of a homespun, who had courted and become "engaged" to Polly before she left home. He came to pay her a visit a short time since, and to set the time for their wedding-day—Polly was to return to Vermont, and superintend domestic duties on Hezekiah's farm. One evening they took a stroll out, and called at a refreshment saloon, invested liberally in kisses and bonbons, and on their return, Hezekiah unfortunately missed his wallet, containing a round one hundred dollars. Of course, Hezekiah was "knocked all in a heap," at his loss, and instituted a search wherever he thought it might avail anything, but all without success. At length—we do not know how it was brought about—Hezekiah was led to suspect Polly, and, being of a frank nature—commonly called "blunt"—he insinuated his suspicions to her. This time *Polly* was "knocked all in a heap," and her mother's "grit" getting aroused, she gave her lover a piece of her mind, for his insinuation—a most excellent Roland for his Oliver. This roused Hezekiah, and a lively "scene" ensued. At last Polly took to crying, and Hezekiah, with his money lost, and his love greatly wounded, "put out" for his boarding-house, feeling as though he would be much more at home at the bottom of the "raging canawl," than in bed; but he concluded the weather was not warm enough for *comfortable* drowning and so he sought his lodgings. As Hezekiah gained them, and pulled off one of his boots preparatory to retiring to his bed—not to rest—lo! out dropped the missing wallet, money all safe.

At this discovery, Hezekiah danced a hornpipe over the floor, with one boot on, and would have acted still more extravagantly, had he not suddenly recalled the condition in which he had left Polly. Catching his hat, he was half-way down stairs before he recollected the boot he had left behind. Rectifying the mistake, he was soon at the door of her boarding-house. Polly was a-bed. "Tell her I've found it—in my boot-leg; it is all right;" was the message sent up by the joyous Hezekiah. But he had made a mistake. *It wasn't all right.* Polly's wounded honor was not to be thus healed—with a breath: and the next morning Hezekiah was duly notified that Polly had concluded not to superintend his domestic arrangements in Vermont, and also that he was expected to return, at his earliest convenience, whatever in the shape of notes, and other valuables he might hold of Polly's, and that she stood ready to serve him in like manner. In vain Hezekiah implored—Polly was inexorable; and the next day he departed for Vermont, thinking that the fuss he had made over that one hundred dollars was the means of losing him as good as a thousand in domestic help on his farm.

MORAL: Think twice, *and look once in your boot-leg*, before you accuse your intended of stealing your port-monnaie.—*Lowell American Citizen.*

SOUTH AMERICAN SNAKES.

In this part of the Orinoco we repeatedly saw water snakes swimming from one island to another; and in some instances they pass over the boats, to the great alarm of the passengers, but without attempting to do any mischief. They are of a light green color, six or eight feet long, and swim with about a third of their body raised out of the water; propelling themselves rapidly along by the undulating motion of their tail. We were informed by the boatmen that their prey consisted chiefly of water rats and young birds. The steersman of the launches always endeavor to avoid sailing under the trees that overhang the river, lest the mast might detach some of the snakes from the branches. We frequently saw numbers of them, exhibiting the most brilliant colors, while basking in the sun on trees. An European traveller who visited these parts in 1838, lay down to sleep on the bank of the Orinoco, and was presently awakened by cries of alarm and horror. What was his dismay when he found himself encircled in the folds of innumerable snakes! The native boatmen, whose cries had aroused him, proceeded to deliver him from the hideous coils in which he was enmeshed; but the traveller never completely recovered from the shock which he had received. His nerves were completely unstrung; and he died delirious about four years afterwards in Porto Rico.—*Venezuela.*

MRS. PARTINGTON.

"There's where the boys fit for college," said the professor to Mrs. Partington, pointing to the school in Bedford Street. "Did they?" said the old lady, with animation, "and if they fit for college before they went there, didn't they fight afterwards?" "Yes," said he, smiling and favoring the conceit; "yes, but the fight was with the head and not with the hands." "Butted, did they?" said the old lady, persistently. "I mean," continued he, "that they wrestled with their studies, and went out of college to be our ministers and doctors." "Ah!" said she, "I never knew that people had to rastle to be ministers and doctors before. I suppose Mr. Crampton is one of these ministers, who has been sent home because he has done wrong, and marcy couldn't save him. I don't know about it, but some say he is sent home because he wanted to get cruets for the British army, and others that he wanted to turn all the mosquitoes agin us. If he does this, he ought to be sent home, for marcy knows we have enough of 'em now." They moved on, Mrs. Partington pondering on who would receive the call in place of the British minister, and Ike and Lion striving for the possession of the old lady's umbrella, which seemed to suffer.—*Evening Gazette.*

THE NORTHMEN AT MONHEGAN.

We some weeks since noticed the fact that Dr. Hamlin, of this city, who visited the island of Monhegan in quest of curious figures said to exist upon rocks there, was successful in his investigation. He took casts of the inscriptions in plaster from the face of the ledge in which they appear. Fac-similes of these casts will be sent to the Archæological Society at Copenhagen. Drawings of the same have also been sent to Rev. Dr. Jenks, a distinguished antiquarian of Boston, by whom they were at once recognized as Runic characters, but their translation will have to come from the Copenhagen Society, which possesses the means to give it.

It is supposed that these inscriptions were made by Northmen, hundreds of years before the discovery of Columbus, who visited what is now known as Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, and who, it is supposed, sailed along a great extent of the eastern coast of North America. The deciphering of these runes will be awaited with great interest.—*Bangor Journal.*

ROYAL ETIQUETTE.

Louis XIII., desiring to hold a private council with his minister and master, Richelieu, was obliged to visit him in his bed-room, where he lay dangerously ill. But as a subject, though dying, could not be permitted to receive the king in bed, except the king was lying in bed also, Louis was wheeled in on a *chaise longue*, and they both thus lay in state to discuss the affairs of the nation. Louis XIV. observed the same form when he went to visit the wounded hero, Turenne.—*N. Y. Mirror.*

An Hibernian observing over a store door in New York, a sign, "General *Finding* Store," entered recently and inquired for a lost umbrella!

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

PROGRESS.

BY WM. RODERICK LAWRENCE.

He who looks cannot but see
Progress stamped on every age;
What the future race will be,
Scan in vain fair history's page.

Let us boldly strive and win,
Ours the work to plan and do;
Till the nations gathered in,
Claim the race and victory too.

Ever looking upward, higher,
Nerve the soul for any strife;
To the distant goal aspire,
Ne'er give o'er while there is life.

Let us nobly strive to win,
Nobly plan and nobly do;
Till the harvest gathered in,
Ours the crown and victory too.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

MRS. LITTLETON'S SECRET.

BY MARY A. LOWELL.

"I WOULD like to tell you a story in point," said Aunt Fanny; "you would perhaps be convinced that people do not always take the right side of the question when they condemn so easily, without hearing both sides."

I had just hazarded a very foolish remark upon the conduct of a lady, with whom I had very little acquaintance, and still less knowledge of her previous life. I alluded to her very marked attachment to a certain gentleman, who frequented our circle; and I am afraid that my remarks were tinged with a slight degree of jealousy; for Sidney Ulmer was the king among our set; and we did not quite relish that any one out of it should claim him in any way.

It was very provoking indeed, when we had sometimes depended on Mr. Ulmer's escort to some place of amusement, or had expected an evening visit, to find that his delinquency arose from his being previously engaged to Mrs. Littleton; and I fear that we did not always speak of her in such terms as the golden rule would seem to point out.

Mrs. Littleton had come into our quiet, pleasant neighborhood some two or three years before this. She had a fine house, and everything around her was on a scale of indisputable gentility; but no one knew anything of her former life, unless Mr. Ulmer could have revealed what it seemed he was not disposed to do. As Mrs. Littleton dressed in mourning, it was natural to suppose her a widow. She had only one child, a daughter of tender age, in whom she seemed to centre all her affection, excepting what we imagined she might reserve for Mr. Ulmer.

Many were the flippant speeches which we made about her, but never before Mr. Ulmer, excepting on one occasion, and his look was so unmistakable in its expression that we did not repeat the experiment.

I was recalling the remembrance of this look to Aunt Fannie's mind, and at the same time, talking much beyond my depth about Mrs. Littleton, when my aunt checked me with the words above. Her evident disapprobation of what I said was more than counterbalanced by the pleasure I felt at her promise of a story; so I submitted to her displeasure without retorting.

Imagine my aunt—she was the smallest of women. A child of ten years old would have equalled her in weight and height. She was no longer young, but her delicate, peaceful looking countenance could never become old, and her garments were perfectly in keeping with her light, fairy-like figure. At this time, she was probably forty-five years old—but except for a sprinkling of white among her light, flaxen hair, she would have looked scarce thirty. Her hands and feet would have been models for a sculptor—so exquisitely were they moulded. Her hands had the beautiful *pink palm*, and the graceful shell-shaped nails, that make the perfection of the hand of a woman. Exquisitely neat was her dress, although simple in its form and color. She wore gray, invariably—gray merino in winter, gray silk or satin in summer; and the plain collar and cuffs were always of the finest linen cambric. No ornament did she wear, unless a miniature was attached to the narrow ribbon around her neck, and of which no one ever saw the concealed end.

I have thus placed my aunt before you, reader, in the best manner of which I am capable. Do you see her? Do you hear her soft, low voice, that "exquisite thing in woman," as she tells a story of interest to my listening ears? for at fifteen, what story is not interesting, if it bear the semblance of reality?

"I was a very young girl," said my aunt, "when I was one day sent by my mother, with a basket of flowers, to a friend in the next street. We had just received them fresh from the country. They were exceedingly beautiful, and as the lady was ill, my mother thought that the flowers would please and refresh her.

"When I entered her chamber, a little child was sitting by her easy-chair, playing with a kitten. She was the loveliest little creature I had ever seen. I cannot describe her to you, but the impression she left on me was as if I had gazed on an angel. I thought of that child day after day, and dreamed of her night after night, and always keeping that same spiritual look in my heart. Her name was Ada. I never knew her other name. I never asked it. To me she needed no other name. She was Ada, the angel.

"Seven years afterwards, I saw her again at the same house. She was fifteen then, and more beautiful, if possible, than ever. She was standing by a window which was curtained solely by plants of the rarest kind, and she was herself the loveliest of them all. I saw her when Allen Graham came up to her, and the blush deepened and glowed upon her cheek, as he spoke to her. I guessed they were words of love—and when three years afterwards I saw them married in church, I recalled these other two scenes, and owned that she grew lovelier with each succeeding year.

"I lost sight of her then, and for many years I did not even hear her name mentioned. But lately, I have seen her again. She has lost every trace of her beauty, for sorrow and grief have altered her more than any person I ever knew. Her husband is not dead, but still worse, he is disgraced. I have reason to think that he is in the prison at C———. One friend alone knows where he is, and he visits him weekly, and reports of his health to the wife. It is all she knows of him. For her child's sake, she has changed her name, and the little one does not know even that she has a father. She is always dressed in deep mourning, for where is there a more sincere mourner than herself? What death was ever half so fearful, so truly to be mourned, as such disgrace as that of the husband and father of whom I speak. My dear Julia, this woman is Mrs. Littleton, and the friend who watches between her and her unhappy husband, is Mr. Ulmer. When he refuses to join your social circle, depend on it he is then engaged in the service of his unhappy friends, and bearing messages between the two, of which no one but himself knows the import."

Well, here at least, was the solution of Sidney Ulmer's intimacy with Mrs. Littleton; a solution of which no one could have dreamed. Thenceforward, Mrs. Littleton was exalted in my mind, into an angel of suffering goodness, if not the angel of beauty my aunt had described. And Mr. Ulmer! I likened him to the embodiment of every virtue under heaven, for his generous conduct in so interesting himself with the fortunes of a family like Mrs. Littleton's.

I was full of the importance of my secret, and could hardly forbear letting Mr. Ulmer know that I sympathized in his noble feelings; but my Aunt Fanny had bound me by a promise to say nothing of it.

I watched Mr. Ulmer many years after this. I saw his cordial friendship for Mrs. Littleton, deepening every year. I saw him, as the little Adelaide grew up, bestowing upon her a brother's care, shielding her from every harm, averting every shadow of blame from her young head.

Adelaide was at school with my little sister, and finding that I was interested in her, Clara always brought me news of her growth, her improvement, her delicate behaviour to teacher and scholars—in short, she was mingled with all my thoughts and sympathies. Soon she began to come home with Clara, who loved her very dearly, and at last, no day was complete in its enjoyment, unless Adelaide shared it with us.

She was growing very beautiful—I loved to fancy that she looked as Aunt Fanny had described her mother. While I gazed upon her, the tears would involuntarily come into my eyes, while she, unconscious that she had anything hanging over her of sorrow or shame—looked the very image of childish glee.

She talked to me, in her childish way, of Sidney Ulmer; a name which had often made my heart beat quicker. I loved to hear his praises from her lips. She had a gold chain, with a fairy watch attached to it, which was Mr. Ulmer's present on her birthday, and pendant from this chain, was a small locket, containing his miniature, exquisitely painted, and a curl of his beautiful light hair.

I would have given worlds for that locket. I coveted its possession—I almost envied the little child, with a jealous envy, for keeping it. Somehow, I felt defrauded of my right. I had known Mr. Ulmer so long, and loved him so well, that I felt that I deserved him; and yet he had only been kind and friendly to me—never loving nor affectionate in his looks or words.

When Clara and Adelaide went out to play, I would make her leave the chain in my room, on pretence that some one might seize and break it, or that she would lose it. She always complied, and then I would sit for hours, gazing on his face, and pressing kisses on the mute lips. "Surely," I said, "this deep, deep love, must win love at last." It seemed to me that God could not be so unkind as to separate me forever from one I loved so well.

One day, Aunt Fanny surprised me with the miniature in my hand, and my eyes wet with tears. She divined my secret, of course. Her soft, feminine heart sympathized fully with my feelings. She soothed and pitied me; but she did not dare encourage. Still, it was a relief to talk to her, and daily and nightly we talked of the possibilities of the future.

Clara and Adelaide went out to play one afternoon, and when they had been gone about an hour, it began to rain. I did not feel uneasy about them, for I knew that Clara had many acquaintances on the road they had proposed following, and I presumed she would avail herself of shelter with some of them.

I was alone in the house, and absorbed as usual with Adelaide's coveted possession. I heard no one enter, and I had just taken it up anew, and was crying over it, when I heard a footstep behind my chair. I started, and in my embarrassment, I displayed the very thing which I intended to conceal. It was Mr. Ulmer, who had come from Mrs. Littleton's to take Adelaide home.

He saw it all—and I, humbled, mortified and confused, could only burst into a fresh shower of tears. He sat down kindly by me, and took my hand. He did not seem either gratified or proud of the discovery which he must surely have made of my insane love—insane, because unasked, unsought. On the contrary, he looked sadly, and with a grave pity on my face, over which the tears were streaming like a shower.

He waited until my emotion had spent itself with its own violence. Then he revealed to me the state of his own heart. He begged me to keep inviolate what he should then tell me. He related to me the full history of Mrs. Littleton's husband, the tender pity which he had for her sorrows, the services which he had been permitted to render them both. He dwelt largely upon the disgrace which had fallen upon the man whom he had once called his friend; whom he called so still, he said; and he talked long and earnestly upon the situation of the wife and child of a convicted criminal.

Mrs. Littleton, he said, had thought more of Adelaide than of herself. If she should die, who would screen this child, now growing up so beautiful, so sensitive, and yet so unconscious of her situation? Her fears were often so great on account of her child, as really to make her ill.

On one occasion, he said that he had found Mrs. Littleton dwelling so morbidly upon this subject, that he promised that he would marry Adelaide, the moment she was sixteen, and guard her scrupulously from ever knowing anything of her father, whose punishment being for life, he would never be thrown in her way. She at first, he said, eagerly accepted his promise—but on reflection, she felt that it was ungrateful to bind his friendship by such a promise, and begged him to withdraw it. He refused, however, and assured her that his heart was perfectly free, and that he loved Adelaide, and should ever love her, more dearly because of this very circumstance—that in a few years, he should be able to shelter her from all possibility of ever knowing what her mother wished to conceal from her.

I almost forgot my own feelings in the charm which Mr. Ulmer's generosity of character impressed upon me. While he was talking, I was really sympathizing in his noble resolve; but when that was all told, I came back to my own disappointed heart again.

Here was a character, exactly like that of which I had dreamed as being the highest and best. He was suited to me in years, in pursuits, in principles—in fact, he was all that I could ask. He owned to me that had it not been for his promise, I should have been his choice, for that he had often dreamed of me as his wife. It was agony to hear him say this, and at the same time plead his promise to Mrs. Littleton. But I was mute in my grief. I did not utter a word. I could not. He was kind, respectful, friendly—but not tender. He had preserved for me my self-respect in some measure by saying that I *might* have been his wife, and I strove to let that content me. It was a single crumb of comfort in my humiliation, and I accepted it.

The children came rushing in out of the shower, and Adelaide claimed her chain. I was calm and composed, and she did not suspect that I had been weeping. She was always fond of me, and now she threw her arms about my neck and kissed me tenderly. Mr. Ulmer watched me narrowly to see if I returned it. I did most earnestly; for although the child seemed to be standing in the way of my happiness, still I had not a bitter thought towards her.

He turned away, apparently satisfied with his scrutiny, and his manner to me grew still more cordial. They went away together, she playfully pulling his umbrella down over her own wet curls, and leaving him exposed to the rain. I did not wonder that she enchanted him with her pretty, tormenting ways, but I could not help a sigh at what *I might have been*.

How glad I was to leave town the next day! That night I had a letter from my mother's brother, begging me to pass the autumn and winter with him, in order to be with his motherless daughter, who had just left school, and was going to attempt housekeeping for her father.

I left the very next morning, and I did not even see home again for a year; then I only staid three days, and the Littletons and Mr. Ulmer were all out of town. I had become attached to my cousin, and she would not hear of my leaving her—and when two years after this she was married, I still staid in her place, to keep house for my uncle; so that it was a long time before chance threw me into contact with my former friends. I could imagine Ada growing up still more beautiful than ever, and I daily expected to hear of her marriage with Mr. Ulmer.

But one day I had a letter from Aunt Fanny, who wrote me thus:

"You will be surprised, Julia, to hear that Mr. Ulmer is going away. Every one thought that he was going to marry Ada Littleton, but latterly, she has been engaged to a young gentleman from the South. He knows all about her father, but says that nothing of that kind would ever influence him. So you see, Julia, that Ulmer is not the only disinterested man in the world, although you used to think so. Mrs. Littleton is not quite pleased at Ada's decision, but submits to it for the sake of her daughter's happiness. Mr. Ulmer is impenetrably silent, and goes away voluntarily, leaving all parties in perfect freedom. His conduct has been perfectly manly and noble."

I cannot say that I received this intelligence calmly. Nay, I own that for several hours, my heart beat so loudly that I could count its throbs. Did Sidney Ulmer remember what he had told me once, and would he act upon it now that he had opportunity to do so? I earnestly wished that Aunt Fanny had kept her intelligence to herself. I had been calm and unexpectant for years. Why could she not have kept her counsel, and not have thus troubled the deep waters in my soul?

An anxious, uneasy feeling pervaded me. I had lost the repose which it had cost me years to attain. I wandered about like one in a dream. I passed a number of months in this state, in which time I was gladdened by the sight of Ada Littleton's marriage in the paper. One thing was certain then—but why did not Mr. Ulmer come forward? I thought of it so much, this strange position in which I was placed, that I could not sleep at all. For many nights I did not close my eyes. Of course, nature gave way to such excitement, and was nearly overthrown. I was taken ill; and for several days, all was a perfect blank. I knew nothing that took place, nor ever heard the voices of my attendants.

I arose from my sick bed, pale, sorrowful and subdued. A feeling of utter debility had seized upon my frame, and I was powerless before it. I had lost all interest in every thing. I rarely thought even of Sidney Ulmer, or if I did, it was as one who thinks of another in the world of spirits—dim, shadowy and immaterial. I could not make him a living and breathing reality.

My uncle took me to Saratoga, hoping that the change would restore me. I wearied of what I found there, and indeed of all the world. Life had become a burden to me, and sometimes I almost wished to lay it down, and be at peace. I had become thoroughly selfish. My heart, that was once alive to every human suffering, had become callous to every sympathetic feeling. This morbid state lasted me for many months; partly from the severe disappointment I had experienced, and partly from the effects of my illness, still lingering about me.

While at Saratoga, I regained something of my old state of health; and with renewed health came a portion of my serenity. I became more interested in passing events, and I had need of strength of mind to bear the coming of Ada Littleton and her husband, whose names I found registered among the arrivals.

I thought that I could not meet her. Memory brought back to me what Ulmer had said long, long ago. But for her, my life would not now be wasting into the sere and yellow leaf so prematurely. She was my bane—my "evil hand." I saw her, however, accidentally. She was fast losing her loveliness in the worldly air of fashion. Almost every trace of the fair child was merged in the bold, loud-talking, showy woman. I did not speak to her, and she would have found it difficult to identify me, changed as I was, from what she had known me.

It was a full season at Saratoga that year. Crowds upon crowds were coming in, and still they came. At the further end of the long breakfast-table, one morning, I saw Mr. Ulmer! His face was paler than usual, but otherwise unchanged. I rejoiced for a moment, that he would not recognize me. I had lost my hair in the terrible fever which I had suffered, and my head was now covered only by short, crisp curls. I had lost a near relative, and wore a plain black dress. Added to this, was the fact that Ulmer did not know my uncle; and I thought that I might in all probability, escape his observation.

Still I could not help staying where I could see his appearance towards her. I lingered, therefore, until she came. I saw a deep crimson come over his pale face, which however, subsided, as he marked her air of decided, and almost insolent fashion. He rose and left the table—I fancied with a look of disgust upon his face.

All that day, he was not visible. I thought he was gone, and tried to make up my mind fully that I should never see him again.

In the evening, the band was playing, and almost unconsciously I found myself seated on the piazza, listening to strains that I had often heard in happier days.

My uncle had left me for a moment, to ask the leader of the band for a repetition of the same piece, when I became aware of the presence of a person at my side, and supposed that it was my uncle returned so speedily. I spoke to him about the music. There was no answer, and I looked hastily up. There sat Sidney Ulmer! The recognition was now mutual. He had not seen me before—did not know that I was there.

We had a *very* quiet talk at the other end of the piazza, where no one else came. Both were calm and composed. The time *had* been when I should have displayed more emotion—but it had gone by. Mr. Ulmer related to me his sufferings when Ada refused to marry him. He had thought of it so long—he had loved her so well, and had put all things relating to her father so completely out of sight, in fact was so noble and generous in his own love, that it could not but pain him [illegible] him up for the love of a stranger.

From this, he dropped naturally into other subjects—but, as if unwilling to leave the other, he suddenly asked me, if I remembered the day of the shower so long ago. *Did* I remember?

* * * * *

I know that my husband still remembers Ada Littleton. I know that his cheek suddenly crimsons or pales when he becomes aware of her presence. I feel that he looks back sometimes, with regret at that beautiful dream of his youth—but I know also, that his heart is mine beyond the power of her attractions to win from me; and in that blessed knowledge, I am the happiest of women. Good little Aunt Fanny smiles at my devotion to him—but Aunt Fanny never had a Sidney Ulmer.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LETTER NO. XI.

WARWICK, England, June 12, 1856.

M. M. BALLOU:—Dear Sir,—Summer has come at last! In England nothing can be more welcome; for the spring and autumn here are not like those seasons in America. The long, long days of this northern latitude seem very queer to us. The sun rises at some fabulous hour in the morning—before four o'clock, the almanac says; we have never had ocular demonstration of its correctness as yet, but intend some morning, if possible, to investigate the subject. Very few, except the farming people, rise early, and I do not believe that half the population of England have seen the sun rise in summer. But though he rises so promptly, the sun does not seem at all inclined to obey the other part of the good old maxim, about going to-bed early. One can read easily at quarter before ten, and it is much later than that when the last twilight disappears.

On Monday we visited Stratford-upon-Avon. A ride of eight miles in an open carriage, through a delightful region of country, brought us to the spot. We passed the little inn where Washington Irving tarried so long, and where he distressed his good landlady so much the night after his arrival, by incessantly poking the fire long after midnight, while his thoughts were far busier with the scenes of the past than his fingers were with the poker. After turning several corners, we at last stopped before *the house*. It has a hoary, venerable look, with its low roof and old-fashioned wood and mortar front, and I could scarcely realize, as I looked upon it, that here commenced the life-scene of the poet of all ages and the whole world.

"Shakspeare, on whose forehead climb
Tears and laughter for all time."

The house is uninhabited, but is kept open for exhibition to the strangers who come to visit it from all parts of the world. We entered, and passed into the kitchen, with its wide fire-place and "chimney corner," where the boy-poet perhaps listened to his grandmother's stories. A sense of awe almost oppressed me as we climbed the rickety, dark stair-way, and entered the very room in which the "wondrous child" was born. It is a shrine to which genius and genius-worshippers have long come to do homage. The walls are perfectly blackened with the names of the pilgrims, who have thus honored them to a place to which few were entitled. Walter Scott's, Washington Irving's and Emerson's are still legible. Byron's has been written over, but the place where it was is shown. Lucien Bonaparte wrote a few lines over the fire-place of the kitchen, but having been nearly obliterated, they were copied upon pasteboard and hung over the spot where he wrote them. Mrs. Stow's name is just visible, but we saw no others worthy of note.

A small box was in the room to receive gratuitous contributions from any who wish to assist in preserving the house, but there is nothing demanded. The ceiling is low, the floor and walls somewhat uneven, the window-panes small, of a yellowish green color, in the old leaden casement. It is probably more than four hundred years old, and the stout oak frame may stand for centuries longer. Let us hope that it will, for it is a monument in which future generations will delight as much as the present.

We rode slowly away from it towards the church where the poet's dust lies buried. It stands in the centre of a yard full of grave-stones, overshadowed by tall old trees, and the Avon winds gently past, almost washing its foundation. It was built in the twelfth century, in the cruciform style, and is a beautiful specimen of the architecture of that period. There is a singular irregularity in the arches which separate the chancel from the nave, intended to represent the inclination of the Saviour's head upon the cross. The chancel has a beautiful stained window over the altar, and several tombs, carved in marble and stone, which were executed before America was discovered. There are also the seats of the monks, who had a college here before the Reformation. They are curiously carved in solid oak, having in them grotesque faces and symbols; but the eye turns from all these to the plain and simple stone slab which covers the dust of the immortal poet. It forms a portion of the floor, just in front of the altar, and the sexton rolled away the matting which covered it, that we might read the well-known verse, composed by the poet himself, which is inscribed upon it:

"Good Frend for Jesus sake forbeare
To digg the dust encloased Heare
Blesse be the man yt spares thes stones
And curst be he yt moves my bones."

On the wall of the chancel, near the grave, is the monument of the poet. It is an arch, between two Corinthian columns, supporting an entablature. Within the arch is a bust of Shakspeare, said to have been made from a cast of the head taken while he lived. The face is unlike the pictures of him which are common. The broad, high forehead is the same, but the lower part of the face is broader, and more expressive. This monument was erected soon after his death, and must be more correct than the modern imitations. Nothing I have seen in England so much impressed me as that tomb, and we lingered long about it, and in the aisles and arches of the old church.

As we retraced our steps through the yard, we were followed by an old man whom we encountered when we entered. I fancied that he might be the one with whom Henry Ward Beecher spent his Sunday afternoon so pleasantly, and after inviting him to tea, and enjoying it much, discovered that he was a resident of the poor-house. D. asked him if he remembered Mr. Beecher. He did not seem to understand at first, but when D. recounted the circumstances, he said he did, quite well; but whether it was recollection, or imagination, I cannot tell. We gave him a trifle, and turning away, bade the church and its tomb farewell.

Yours truly, J. P. B.

News Glances.

THE HEBREWS.—Congress has just passed an act granting to the Hebrew congregation in Washington all the rights and privileges enjoyed by the Christian churches in the same city. The disability thus removed has been thoughtlessly permitted to exist since the foundation of the government, until brought to the attention of the United States Senate, a short time ago, in some well-timed remarks by General Cass.

TRAVELLING EATING HOUSE.—Late foreign papers state that a complete restaurant on wheels, comprising kitchen, eating rooms, etc., is now to be seen daily circulating about the streets of Lyons, France. At regular hours the establishment pulls up in front of the silk and other manufactories, employing a large number of hands, and the enterprising proprietor, it is said, is rapidly making a fortune.

ALPHABETS.—The Phenician alphabet, invented by Cadmus, had originally only fifteen letters. But the English has twenty-six; the Spanish twenty-seven; the Arabic twenty-eight; the Persian thirty-two; the Turkish thirty-three; the Russian forty-one; the Sanscrit fifty; and the Chinese two-hundred and fourteen.

A LARGE CHURCH.—The largest church in Europe is at St. Petersburg. It was begun in 1771, and in twenty years two thousand men had not finished its walls. It is of polished marble, both inside and out; the pillars are of one piece, fifty feet high; the base and capitals of solid silver.

DROWNED.—The public journals report numerous cases of the loss of life by drowning. So many persons venture upon the water who are not capable of managing a boat, and such numbers bathe in the warm weather, that cases of drowning are quite frequent.

POPULATION AND BIBLES.—The population of the United States is now over 25,000,000, making nearly 6,000,000 families; of these, it is believed more than 1,000,000 are without the Bible.

EXTRADITION TREATY.—The Independence Belge states that a treaty for the extradition of criminals has just been concluded between the United States and the Netherlands.

THE FLAG OF OUR UNION

MATURIN M. BALLOU,
EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

☞ Terms of the FLAG OF OUR UNION, $2,00 per annum, invariably in advance, being discontinued at the expiration of the time paid for. See imprint on last page.

☞ All persons who are subscribers to THE FLAG OF OUR UNION, whether in club or otherwise, who will enclose us $2, stating that they are on the subscription list of the Flag, shall receive BALLOU'S PICTORIAL for one year, commencing with the same date their Flag subscription commences.

THE SEASIDE IN SUMMER.

Talk of old ocean in the winter season, and it sends a shudder through your frame. It is well enough to sit by the cosy grate, or, what is better and healthier, though costlier, a blazing fire of oak and walnut, and read the romance of the "dark and deep blue ocean," but as for "going down to the sea in ships," in December and January, the idea is only to be entertained by a candidate for a lunatic asylum, or a business man, whose duty compels him to disregard the weather. But when the parching heats of summer come on, when the sun looks fiery down, when the sidewalks scorch your soles, when—even in the country—the brooks are dwindled to narrow threads of silver, and the corn looks drooping and yellow in the fields, and the foliage by the roadsides is dry and dusty, then memories of the great deep in its glory and beauty, and freshness and grandeur, crowd back on you with the force of a first love, and you are ready to rush into almost any spot where you are sure of meeting its cool embrace.

There is no monotony about old ocean. "From morn till dewy eve" its colors play through all the tones of the chromatic scale. It is alternately purple, azure gold, crimson and green. Even in the night, when the mists creep over the distant horizon, and the light houses come out like stars bursting on the firmament, one by one upon their rocky station points along a far extent of shores, all is not darkness in the waves that sink in music on the beach, or are shivered like glass upon the pointed rocks. A thousand phosphorent stars, the seeming reflex of the firmament above, glitter in the surf. And then how grand, how tragic, is the deep in the roused fury of a summer storm; when the clouds press downwards in black battalions, and the crested waves, like plumed warriors, rise to do battle to the storm! How in the sudden uprising of the tempest, the white wings of the vessels in the offing suddenly disappear, as they take in sail to meet the startling emergency!

But in all these phases, we have but a distant acquaintance with the ocean, after all. To know it we must plunge into its heart—we must feel the exhilarating joy of the strong swimmer that lays his hand upon the tresses of the raging billows, as the lion-tamer strokes the mane of the lord of the desert. There is joy and health in thus sporting with the brine. Then the thought of moonlight rides along the sea beach, of hearing poetry recited by lips we love on the margin of the deep, with the running accompaniment of breaking ripples, like musical bells chiming into the melody of the verse—it is enough to make an editor forswear his inkstand and desert his post.

But for the proper enjoyment of a fit of genuine laziness, commend us to a nook in the rocks, with a volume not too pleasant or engrossing, the shadow of a tall cliff over us, and a good lookout upon the broad expanse of ocean. What then to us is the strife—the angry passion of the fretting world! We find its type is the incessant war of wave and rock; and there is enough of excitement in that endless combat. How senseless to us seems the fierce pursuit of gold and of the "bubble reputation." We watch the white sails dipping and disappearing below the horizon, and imagination goes forth with them to tropic climes, to islands in the Pacific, to the haunts of the Nereides and the homes of the Fayaways. From such dreams, peopled with "creatures of the element," we go back to the routine of daily life refreshed and invigorated. No one is worse for a brief sojourn by the seaside in summer.

THEY ARE GOING.

The large trees which have long adorned the estate on the corner of Chauncey and Summer Streets, were lately cut down. There was no minstrel to sing "Woodman, spare that tree!" as the axe was laid to the root of each, and if there had been he would probably have been ordered by the policemen to "move on," for the inexorable necessities of trade require their fall. With the great exception of the Common, and a few spots here and there, Boston will soon be treeless, and we, who are not too old to rank under the banner of Young America, will only remember it as a city of gardens.

POETICAL AND PROSAIC.—We do not often see poetry and prose so happily combined as in the following advertisement put forth by a yeoman of Wisconsin: "The surrounding country is the most beautiful God ever made. The scenery is celestial—divine; also two wagons and a yoke of steers for sale."

FIREWORKS.—The mayor of Brooklyn, N. Y., ordered his police to suppress the discharge of squibs, crackers and fire-arms in the streets on the Fourth; but the police found it easier to read the "vermilion ukase" than to enforce it.

SATISFIED.—The gentleman who thought his ice cream would be better fried, has expressed himself satisfied with the late hot weather, as it accomplished his object.

EXPRESSIVE.—The Germans call a railroad car *Der Dampfwagen*—the damp wagon; and a steamship is a *Dampschiff*—they are apt to be rather damp.

ONE IDEA.

It is just as bad to cling to one idea as to use only one kind of exercise: no man can hope for a well-balanced mind without it is a many-sided one. The mind is so nicely balanced that, unless all its parts are kept in motion, are properly exercised and properly employed, the whole fabric becomes disordered and paralyzed. Nearly all lunatics are monomaniacs. No man ought to have only one hobby-horse—he should have a whole steed of them and ride them by turns, unless he wishes his racing-jacket to be changed into a straight-jacket. A love of horses, for instance, is not incompatible with a love of loftier things; Alfieri was passionately fond of them. But there is all the difference in the world between Alfieri, the poet and lover of liberty, and young Noodle, who almost lives in the stable, and talks nothing but horse, morning, noon and night. Noodle estimates a man, not by his moral and intellectual qualities, but by his weight. Is he light enough to back a three-year old? Would he do to ride the bay filly for the thousand-dollar stake? Put him on the box of a stage coach with the "lines" in his hand, and he is as happy as a king upon his throne—much happier, if all tales told out of school be true.

Noodle's friend, Jinkins, is another monomaniac, with a different crotchet in his head, or "bee in his bonnet," as the Scotch say. The military is his hobby. He walks, or rather marches, as if he had a drill sergeant before him. He asks you, when he meets you, if you know how many buttons there are on the sleeve of the new regulation uniform, and if you can't answer him, pities your ignorance from the bottom of his heart. Then there is the nautical monomaniac.

> "The sun was white and red the morn
> The noisy hour that he was born;
> The whale it whistled, the porpoise rolled,
> And the dolphin bared his scales of gold;
> And never was heard such an uproar wild
> As welcomed to earth the ocean child."

He dresses in a blue jacket and white pants, chews tobacco voraciously, and frequently refers to his "top-lights" in a very mysterious manner. He sneers malignantly at "land lubbers," and, like Long Tom Coffin, "can't see the use of having any land, except to hold an anchor-fluke or raise a few vegitables and potatoes." But this hapless monomaniac was never afloat—not he. He is a sailor only in imagination. He once went to Nahant by steamboat, but was so awfully sick that he has patronized the railroad ever since. Yet he is the victim of one idea—"the sea, the sea, the open, open sea." The prize-ring, the stage, politics, have all their representative men of one idea; and the worst luck we can conceive of is to be compelled to listen to one of these individuals for an hour as he chants the praises of his favorite hobby, and fairly "runs the thing into the ground."

HELP.

Some housekeepers complain that it is a bitter satire to call domestics in this country "help." We dare say that when Mrs. Col. Freemont did her own housework in California, she got along a great deal better than she has done since with servants to oversee. An English nobleman once had a French valet reply in person to his advertisement for a servant. The applicant produced his credentials, and enlarged on his accomplishments. He was then asked what his terms were. "Three hundred pounds a year," answered the valet. "Zounds! fellow," exclaimed his lordship; "make it guineas, and I'll wait on you!" A nobleman once found Fontenelle in very bad humor. "What is the matter with you?" he asked. "The matter!" replied Fontenelle; "I have but one domestic, and I am as badly served as if I had twenty!"

NEW PUBLICATION.—THE PICKWICK PAPERS. By CHAS. DICKENS. 2 vols 12mo. Philadelphia: T. B. Peterson & Co. Mr. Peterson deserves the thanks of the admirers of "Boz," and they embrace the whole reading public, for this elegant and convenient edition of the most delightful of his works. And we are glad to learn that the two volumes before us are only the pioneers of a series in the same form. The whole will embrace twenty-four volumes, and contain all that Dickens has written. These before us contain no fewer than twenty-five steel engravings, and the succeeding ones will be illustrated in the same liberal style. This edition cannot fail to command an extensive sale.

TALL TALKING.—A Yankee and a John Bull had a quarrel together, which was made up by the bystanders. "Jerusalem!" said the Yankee, "you may thank your stars I warn't exactly spilin' for want of a fight. If I'd ketched holt of you, I'd have throw'd you so high in the air that the flies would a' had time to eat you up alive afore you tetched the airth agin."

JAPANESE COTTON.—The New York Courier and Enquirer has received a specimen of cotton brought from Japan, by the schooner Gen. Pierce. The Courier says it resembles very closely the cotton grown on trees in South America. It is harsh to the touch, fibre very coarse and short.

NOT VERY RICH.—At a recent congratulatory meeting given to the Rev. T. M. Cooley, in East Granville, he stated that during the sixty years of his ministry—all in that village—he had laid up *sixty cents*. People fond of money would hardly take to preaching in that village.

THE SEASON.—There are lots of southern gentlemen and ladies at our watering places, giving life and vivacity to these resorts. The exodus from New Orleans commenced several weeks ago, and only "Can't-get-away clubs" remain to brave the scorching heat.

THE WEATHER.—Our metropolitan churches are very thinly attended on Sunday afternoons. Before long, either only one session will be held, or else the congregations will meet earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon.

HARD TIMES.—They have had a severe blow in London, lately. The gale uprooted at least twenty-five large trees in Hyde Park, and also did considerable damage in Green Park.

ONLY ONE.—The town of Waltham, Mass., with a population of 6000, has but a single pauper. Waltham is a thriving place.

EDITORIAL INKDROPS.

Three dips in a river on a ducking stool to punish a scold is still law in England.

A southern editor has purchased a race-horse to chase delinquent subscribers.

The journey between Minnesota and N. York city has been in three days six hours.

"That's a flame of mine," said the blacksmith's bellows to the fire.

A paste made of saleratus and water is said to cure the stings of wasps, etc.

The man who was "entitled to the floor," got it by being knocked down.

The best artificial teeth in the world are now made in the United States.

To remove superfluous hair, tell a woman she is old and ugly.

A swarm of bees lately took possession of a street lamp in our city.

An editor in Iowa has been fined $150 for kissing a woman in meeting.

A gentleman in Peoria lately shot himself because a lady refused him.

Don't drink too much cold water this hot weather. A sip is sufficient.

The Connecticut legislature has appropriated $15,000 for a school for idiots.

The Independent Company of Cadets, Col. Amory, has been encamping at Nahant.

W. H. Osborn, an English gentleman, has a bright green rose in bloom.

Lord Derby had rather win the Derby prize cup than be Premier.

Mr. T. W. Wood, a New York artist, has recently completed a fine bust of Agassiz.

The fashionable watering places and summer retreats were never fuller than now.

Jenny Lind is opposed to the Italian method of vocal music.

We are sending to the English Colt's revolvers. Don't they want some balls?

An epidemic among horses has lately been prevailing in Manchester, N. H.

The corner stone of the new insane asylum at Northampton was laid July 4th.

It is said John Van Buren is to marry the only daughter of the late John C. Calhoun.

The English parliamentary oath is soon to be amended to accommodate Jews.

The robbery of ladies by pickpockets, while shopping, has lately become common.

INGRATITUDE.

One of the most striking instances of ingratitude—in this case it was the result of avarice—that we ever met with is related by Dr. King, in his "Anecdotes of his own Times:" Sir William Smythe, of Bedfordshire, was his kinsman. When he was nearly twenty, he was persuaded to be couched by Taylor, the famous oculist, on an agreement that the operator should receive sixty guineas if he succeeded in restoring his patient to any degree of sight. Taylor accomplished his task, and Sir William was able to read and write without spectacles for the remainder of his life. But no sooner had the operation been performed, and Sir William seen the good effects of it, than, instead of being overjoyed as most people would have been, he began to lament the loss (as he called it) of his sixty guineas. His contrivance, therefore, was now to cheat the oculist. He pretended he could not see anything perfectly, and for that reason the bandage was continued on a month longer than the usual time. By this means, he obliged Taylor to compound the bargain and accept of twenty guineas; for a covetous man thinks no method dishonest which he may legally practise to save his money. In our opinion, Sir William Smythe, baronet, of Bedfordshire, was an unmitigated rascal.

AGRICULTURAL.—Dr. Parker, our commissioner to China, is exploring the northern portion of that empire with the view of procuring seeds of valuable plants to be forwarded to this country. Our government have placed a thousand dollars at his disposal for this purpose. We hope that the doctor will gather and pack the seeds himself, for the Chinamen are so jealous of foreigners that they usually boil such seeds as they are willing to give away or sell.

ALGERIA.—Twelve hundred tribes now acknowledge the French authority in Algeria. Louis Napoleon talks of erecting it into a kingdom: so that if he should be obliged to walk out of the Tuileries some fine day he will have a place of refuge to go to. Nobody will think of "carrying the war into Africa."

GREAT INVENTION.—A scientific ecclesiastic of Tuscany, Signor Glasselli, has effected an improvement in telegraph writing, by which the correspondence may be carried on in the handwriting of the sender of the message. The despatches look as if executed with a pen. This surpasses the marvel of printing by electricity.

MECHANICS' FAIR.—The fair of the Mechanics' Association in this city in September next, promises to be a display of unequalled attraction. Faneuil and Quincy Halls will be united by a bridge of unique construction. Billings has designed an elegant diploma for the exhibition.

SUICIDE.—Yankee Sullivan committed suicide in San Francisco after being arrested by the Vigilance Committee. But a short time since this champion of the ring was the prime favorite of the king of the Sandwich Islands.

MR. CRAMPTON.—John Bull doesn't like the dismissal of Mr. Crampton one bit. If John will take the trouble to look at the documents, he will find that we are right and he is wrong—as usual in our little differences.

LIBERTY OF SPEECH.—A French editor having spoken disrespectfully of the French emperor while riding in a public carriage, lately, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment.

THE POISONER.—Wm. Palmer, the English poisoner, went to the gallows without making confession of his hideous crimes.

BALLOU'S PICTORIAL DRAWING-ROOM COMPANION,

For the present week embraces the following contents:

"The Gipsey's Secret: or, The League of Guilt," a story of high and humble life, by the author of "THE CONTRABANDIST."
"To a Friend," lines by THOMAS PATTON, JR.
"A Smuggler in spite of himself," a story by FREDERICK W. SAUNDERS.
"A Cure for Despondency," a sketch by MRS. E. WELLMONT.
"I ne'er acknowledged thee!" verses by BLANCHE D'ARTOISE.
"The Suicide," a tale by ARTHUR ELLINGWOOD.
"To my Daughter Mary," stanzas by HON. N. T. ROSSETER.
"Dogs of Damascus," an Eastern sketch, by Dr. J. V. C. SMITH.
"Johnny Clarence Phelps," a lament by WILLIS E. PARGE.
"Almost too late," a story by MARY A. LOWELL.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

A large portrait of the Earl of Cardigan, Commander of the Light Brigade in the Crimea.

Representation of the new and superb iron building just erected by Parker Fowle & Sons, 164 Washington Street, Boston.

View of the Shaker Village of Canterbury, N. H.

A series of delineations in Chicago, that rapidly thriving city of the West; giving a representation of the Light House, Block House, and Marine Hospital—the Reservoir on Adams Street, the Western Market, and Randolph Street.

Portrait of Winslow Lewis, M. D., one of Boston's most honored and efficient physicians.

Picture of the Cooper Institute, New York city.

A beautiful design representing a Bride arraying for her Wedding.

*** The Pictorial is for sale at all the Periodical Depots in the United States, at six cents a copy.

☞ One copy of THE FLAG, and one copy of the PICTORIAL, when taken together, for $4 00 per annum.

Foreign Items.

The potato crop has proved a complete failure throughout Portugal.

Baron James de Rothschild has given forty thousand francs to the sufferers by the late inundations in France.

The increase of government expenditure in Great Britain during the two years of the recent Russian war was £53,688,000.

A subterranean railroad is now being laid down in Paris, in the middle of the Boulevard du Sebastopol. It will connect the *halles* or markets with the extramural railways.

Munich has decreed that the graves of Sennefelder, the inventor of lithography, and Gabelsberger, the inventor of stenography, shall henceforth be carefully kept.

The pianos annually manufactured in France are worth 40,000,000 francs. "France plays," said M. Veron recently in the Corps Legislatif, "while the rest of Europe dances."

The emigration from Norway to the United States is very considerable this year, and the emigration fever in some parts of the country is so great that the value of property has fallen considerably.

A flute made of gold is on exhibition in London. The gold was brought from Australia. The weight of the flute is 14 1-2 ounces, the value being estimated at about $650. The workmanship is exquisite.

The locomotives in Germany are hereafter to be covered with a casing of glass, which will permit the engineers to survey the whole country, and at the same time protect them from the wind and cold.

The steeple-chase on the Prater at Vienna was a dead failure. A trough had been laid across the road so as to represent a river, but the horses, instead of clearing it, drew up, and began in the coolest manner to drink out of it!

Dewdrops of Wisdom.

Everything unknown to us, we suppose to be magnificent.

What is done in fury or anger can never be placed to the account of courage.

The only freedom worth possessing is that which gives enlargement to a people's energy, intellect, and virtues.

Voltaire defined a physician as an unfortunate gentleman, expected every day to perform a miracle—namely, to reconcile health with intemperance.

The genius of the age and the concurrence of circumstances disposes of everything, and gives to the same cast of character forms varied to infinity.

There is nothing makes a man suspect much more than to know little; and, therefore, men should remedy suspicion by procuring to know more and to not keep their suspicions in smother.

As by the friction of two pieces of ice heat may be extracted, so in the coldest bosom may dwell a warmth that only waits for some favorable circumstance to bring it into action.

The aim of education should be to teach us rather how to think than what to think—rather to improve our minds so as to make us think for ourselves, than to load the memory with the thoughts of other men.

There is something inexpressibly sweet about little girls. Lovely, pure, innocent, ingenuous, unsuspecting, full of kindness to brothers, babies and everything. They are sweet little human flowers, diamond dew-drops in the breath of morn.

"I live according to right reason," says the Stoic; "I live to seize the pleasures of the passing days," says the Epicurean; "I live to contemplate the unchangeable truth," says the Platonist; and all three live but in a vain squirrel cage round of vanity.

Joker's Budget.

So many people "cut a dash" with money, that it is highly incorrect to call it "blunt."

What sort of trees will best bear removal and transportation? Axle-trees.

"Papa, have guns got legs?" "No." "How do they kick, then?" "With their breeches, my son."

What animal has the greatest quantity of brains? The hog, of course, for he has a *hogs-head* full.

"Massa, one ob your oxen's dead—todder too—was 'fraid to tell you ob 'em bof at once, 'fraid you couldn't bore it."

What Scripture character would you mention in ordering away an untruthful person. Ans.—Goliah. (go liar.)

Mrs. Fly was asked if she kneaded her dough, or beat it up with a stick. "If you can find anybody that 'needs the dough' more than I do," said she, "pity take mercy on 'em!"

The largest angel we ever read of was seen by Mahomet in the third heaven, which the Koran says had two eyes seventy thousand days' journey apart.

"My dear Coleridge," said Charles Lamb once to his old and dear friend, "you are one of the very best men in England; you have but one infirmity, you always fail just when you happen to have a duty to perform."

"Here," said a dandy to an Irish laborer, "come and tell me the biggest lie you ever told in your life, and I'll treat you to a whiskey punch." "An' by my sowl," replied the Hibernian, quickly, "yer honor is a gentleman."

Quill and Scissors.

The Emperor of Brazil, in his address to Parliament, said that notwithstanding some attempts to evade the vigilance of the government, the trade in slaves is completely done away with throughout the empire. The debt and credit of the empire for the coming year are calculated at £4,001,999. The national debt is £14,655,850.

There is now scarcely a single State in the Union but what has an asylum for the insane, and some of the States have several. Even in California, a large and expensive hospital has been erected for the insane, as one of the first objects of attention in that State.

Mrs. Morton, of Albany, lost her husband in 1854 by the upsetting of a skiff used for ferriage across the Hudson, by its owner, Mr. Ebenezer Wiswall. She sued him for damages, and an Albany jury has adjudged her $3000 for the loss of her husband.

A short time since a thief was placed in the pillory at Key West, Florida, and for one hour exposed to the public gaze, and showers of rotten eggs, fruit, etc., thrown by boys. He was then committed to jail, to be sent from the Key by the first opportunity.

According to the Syracuse Standard, two men captured a snake near that city a short time since, which was found to contain five hundred and seventy-six embryo snakes. There were twenty-four knots and eggs, each containing twenty-four snakes.

The Kentucky Horticultural Society offers a reward of $500 to the discovery of a certain and effectual remedy against the *curculio*. Said remedy not to be so costly or troublesome as to prevent general application.

While Samuel Shepard was helping to move a barn in Otisco, N. Y., recently, the levers gave way, and the barn fell upon him, crushing him into the earth. He lived but a few moments after being taken out.

In Newcastle, Pa., Samuel Cannon was fined $10 for kissing Rebecca Rose against her will. On paying the fine and costs, Cannon was discharged. Suppose he was loaded with "grape" at the time.

Extensive fires have prevailed, recently, on the mountains in the vicinity of Pottsville, Pa., and a considerable amount of timber and other property has been destroyed.

The fire which occurred in Portland a few weeks since, was the most destructive which had been experienced there for many years. The loss is estimated at $200,000.

Corporal Manning, of the U. S. Army, at Fort Myers, Florida, was lately attempting to pass the sentinel on his hands and knees, and failing to answer the challenge, was shot dead.

Mr. Thomas Colby, who hung himself in Bow, N. H., very skilfully on a ladder, was a member of the Baptist church and in easy circumstances, but was afraid he should come to want.

A lad about nine years of age recently fell from the brow of Federal Hill, Baltimore, Md., a distance of seventy feet, and strange to say, was uninjured, except a few slight bruises.

Great distress for want of food prevails at many of the outposts of Newfoundland. Large numbers of the people were in a state of actual starvation.

Baltimore is to be placed in regular communication with Savannah by a line of steamers. A vessel has been procured, and the money secured in full for the payment.

Dr. Pliny A. Jewett has been nominated to the professorship in the medical institution of Yale College, made vacant by the resignation of Professor Beers.

The division of the Bible into chapters was made in the 12th century, by Cardinal Santo Claro, for the purpose of facilitating theological studies.

It is proposed to supply the city of Providence, R. I., with water from Tenmile River, in Seekonk, at a cost of one million of dollars.

There are now no less than three hundred and sixty-four churches in Rome, while the population is considerably less than two hundred thousand.

It is said that Jenny Lind is about to pay another visit to the United States. She will receive a cordial welcome.

The Newport Mercury has now entered its ninety-ninth year, with prospects brighter than at any previous period since its birth.

The Memphis Eagle and Enquirer is informed of the discovery of a coal bed near Somerville, in Fayette County, Tenn.

The French Consul at San Francisco announces that New Caledonia is open for French and foreign colonists.

Adelaide Phillips was recently thrown from a horse at Utica, thereby breaking her ankle.

Marriages.

In this city, by Rev. Dr. Gannett, Mr. James H. Weeks to Miss Eunice M. W. Faxon.
By Rev. Mr. Blaikie, Mr. Benjamin Roach to Miss Margaret Pollock.
By Rev. Mr. Streeter, Mr. Richard Pasquell to Miss Hannah C. Lamont.
By Rev. Mr. Miner, Mr. William S. Warren to Miss Anna S. Gertridge.
By Rev. Mr. Alger, Mr. James Lodge to Miss Mary L. Greenwood.
By Rev. Mr. Smithett, A. Francis Downing, Esq. to Miss Lizzie F. McKay.
At Chelsea, by Rev. Mr. Cox, Mr. Dexter W. Rollins, of Boston, to Miss Lucy C. Stone.
At Somerville, by Rev. Mr Williams, Mr. Samuel Caldwell, of Boston, to Miss Amelia A Reynolds.
At Lynn, by Rev. Mr. Shackford, Mr. Amos P. Tapley to Miss Anna S. Ireson.
At Salem, by Rev. Mr. Allen, Mr. Charles Woodbury to Miss Elizabeth L Goldsmith.
At Ipswich, by Rev. Mr Hannaford, Mr. Daniel Camet, to Miss Kate Gillisee, of Boston.
At Lowell, by Rev Mr. Eddy, Mr. William Dresser to Miss Eliza D. Goodwin.
At Gloucester, by Rev. Mr. Rogers, Mr. George A. Proctor to Miss Jane G. Sylvester.
At Newburyport, by Rev. Mr. Reed, Mr. George C. Canney to Miss Harriet Skillner.
At Worcester, by Rev. Mr. Adams, Mr. Artemas Newton Church to Miss Caroline Augusta Cook.
At Whitingham, Vt., by Rev. Mr. Ballou, Hosea B. Ballou, Esq to Miss Adelia Murdock.

Deaths.

In this city, Hon. Luther Stearns Cushing, 53; Mr. Samuel Newcomb, 69; Mrs. Elizabeth Watts, wife of George H Kingsbury, Esq.; Mrs. Hannah E., wife of Mr. John D. Weld; Mrs. Rebecca G. Varnham, 27; Mrs Mary B. Backus, 34; Mrs. Mary Jane Page, 24; Mr. Charles H. Haynes, 25; Mr. Luther Cook, 26; Miss Chloe A. Lee, 41; Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Honeybun, 25; Mr. William A. Field, 62; Mr. George Balterman, 23.
At Charlestown, Widow Fanny Godsoe.
At Roxbury, Mr. Jesse E. Henderson, 48; Mrs. Mary A. Hall, 53.
At Watertown, Mr. George Henry Stone, 27.
At Newtonville, Mr. George W. Badger, 34.
At Stoughton, Mr. John Atherton 30.
At Waltham, Mrs. Eleanor S. Treat, 31.
At Lynn, Mrs. Lucy Cole, 45; Mrs. Lydia Ann Newhall, 44; Mrs. Sarah M. Winthrop, 21.
At Salem, Mr. Joseph Marshall, 58; Mr. Nicholas L. Derby, 48; Capt. Pyam Dodge, 82.
At Danvers, Mr. James Mahoney, 48.
At Cohasset Capt Ephraim Snow, 78.
At Newburyport, Widow Abigail Bayley, 85; Mr. Elias Jackman, 41.
At Holliston, Mr. Timothy Adams, 67.
At Pepperell, Dr. Lewis Joseph Glover, of Quincy, 49.
At Groton, Mr. Oliver Wentworth, 94.
At Haverhill, D. Fayette Ayer, M.D., 31.
At New Bedford, Mr. Godfrey Brown, 78.
At Dartmouth, Mrs. Mary F. Gifford, 82.
At Auburn, Dea. Nathan Knowlton, a soldier of the Revolution, 96.
At Portland, Me., Dea. Benjamin Ilsley, 86

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

LINES TO DESPONDENCY.

BY LEVISA LOCK.

Why lingerest thou, Despondency,
Around my saddened mind?
Dost think my sighs inviting thee
A shelter there to find?

Dost think that sorrow's agony,
And disappointments sore,
Will bid me clasp thy darkened form,
And cherish hope no more?

Ah, no! I would not that my woes
Were even one the less;
For they are from the hand of God,
Who chastens but to bless.

Then linger not! I would not have
Thy darkened form so near,
O'ershadowing each brighter thought
With agony or fear.

For were my woes three times as great,
And disappointments more,
I'd recognize the hand of God,
And his blest name adore.

I still would fondly cherish hope,
And thy dark form dispel;
Trusting, through every darkened way,
That all would yet be well.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

MY MERRY MEN OF MADRID.

BY FRANCES P. PEPPERELL.

[The following manuscript was found among some old, time-yellowed parchments, characterized by a bold and free chirography, and also—if I may dare say it—by similar spelling. It bore the date of 1556, and is translated below.]

PHILIP, Marquis de Escoriaza, Knight of the Crown and Captain of the Merry Men of Madrid, to his posterity in the new world, by the grace of God, greeting! Whereas his children have frequently besought him for the true recountal of his first coming to these shores, he herewith sets forth the foundation of that glory of his house, which his sons will perpetuate:

When first I saw Christine, she broke bread for the poor of the vassalage in the hall of her father, a German baron. Again I came upon her, in the forest, where she was sitting on a log overgrown with moss and vines, and felled across a brook. A ray of the yellow, afternoon sunshine fell through the leaves above, slantingly, on the black, unbraided tresses, crowning them with a cast of yellow glory—for though a child of the Saxon, her hair was black enough for a Catalonian,—thence proceeding, the sunbeams lighted up the large blue eyes, and touching a waxen-white shoulder, slid off and down upon the senseless log, whose brown moss it transmuted into glistening gold, and then hesitating a moment on the bare, tiny foot, and glittering in all the water-drops dripping thence, as she held it above the stream, glided off and illuminated the pebbly pave and shiny-scaled fish beneath. Though now a good memory serves to paint the details, what eyes had I then for anything save the central point of my picture—the arch, radiant face of Christine?

When next I saw her, it was in the court of the castle of Pavia, and the Princess Margaret of Anjouleme was above. It is unnecessary to state how she came to be so far from her northern home, other than to say that she was a maid of honor to the sister of Francis, the king of France, who, on her way to Spain, there to plead for the enfranchisement of her imprisoned brother, had turned aside to the castle of Pavia; for what purpose will be evident when I add that the young and handsome Henry d'Albert, King of Navarre, was here a prisoner, and that Margaret was the lovely widow of the Duc d'Alencon. Christine was the only lady in waiting of the princess in this rather dangerous adventure, and therefore allowed more liberty of movement than if there were more attendants. She stood in the court-yard, playfully balancing a vase of honey between her little jewelled fingers, as I threw myself from my panting and foamy horse; and although she had seen me coming across the plain, she characteristically pretended otherwise. In re-payment for such pretence, for the life of me I could not forbear kissing so damask a cheek, but with considerable anger at the salute, its recipient drew haughtily back, and would have gone in, half mounting the open stone steps. I vehemently entreated pardon for the nonce, and that the light of her countenance might not be withdrawn from me.

"His honor rides too swiftly to care for such light," quoth she. "A wax taper, wherewith to read his despatches, will better suit him. What brings the Marquis de Escoriaza to Pavia?"

"Wait a moment; and what brings the queen of my heart here?"

She looked round, as if searching out such a royal person; but the little dwarf, Ionio, who stood on the pavement below her, cried:

"Pretend again, simple sweetheart; who is here but you?"

"Her highness," said Christine, not heeding him, "is above."

"I asked not for her highness, but for Christine."

"Ask of herself," she said, pointing to a girl who bore water across the court.

"Is *that* the Lady Christine?" said I.

"Ah," she answered, raising her bright eyes, "it was the *Lady* Christine his honor inquired concerning?"

"Whom else?" said the dwarf. "You knew it all the time; and you made no such fuss when the King of Navarre kissed you an hour since; and when the princess said yon picture in the hall was like one Escoriaza, who turned pale and bit her lip?"

"Let his gigantic highness take that in lieu of an Usted!" she answered, mockingly, and turning the vase of honey, poured it out on the head of the dwarf, who vainly dodgedt he mellifluous stream falling in flashes on his leonine hair. "Perchance he will forget his *tu*, when next he addresseth his slave, sirrah!" And she flashed up the steps and out of sight.

It was no easy matter to follow the Lady Christine, who flashed on and up all the intricate ways of a well-built castle, with which she had had hardly two hours to acquaint herself, but so I contrived to do; and when at last, as she entered a low door (it is no one's-business if I repeated the offence of the court-yard), the door swung open, and we were in the presence of royalty.

It would be presumption in me to endeavor to describe the beauty of Margaret, the Duchess d'Alencon, daughter of Louisa of Savoy, and sister of Francis the king; but if I stood dazzled a moment, for the hundredth time, before that perfect and bewitching face, I am not to blame, children, even though your mother stood beside me, and Christine herself has long since forgiven me. The duchess sat on a low stool, opposite Navarre, and seemed from her attitude to have been vehemently entreating the king, who gazed at her with a passionate tenderness and admiration.

"Welcome! welcome! Escoriaza!" she cried. "Thou hast brought some news, I see, that will force him to escape. Quick! let us hear it, my friend."

"His majesty of Spain rideth at haste with his cortege at not two hours' distance, having crossed the river from Parma."

"Now! now, Henry!" cried Margaret, "escape or never! Wilt thou go join Francis in his dungeon, or wilt thou free thyself? For my sake, Henry."

"I cannot," answered Navarre. "Where will be the honor of my manhood?—where my love for thee?—what boots it to free myself and leave thee in my place? I am safe here, as I have said, Margaret; thou, my forfeit, wouldst not be safe!"

"Help me, Escoriaza!" she cried, turning to me. "Say something that will have effect."

"My sovereign's purpose in coming hither is to try his majesty of Navarre for treason."

"How knowest, Margaret," said the king, in a low tone and another language, "that this man, evidently a traitor to his sovereign, is not a traitor to thee?"

"I am too well acquainted, sire," interrupted I, "with the tongues of our southern Europe to render the present words private. Be assured that my devotion to the Princess Margaret began with my childhood. I but slightly repay a debt of gratitude when I serve her, and am in no way traitorous to my lawful liege. It is from no love of Navarre that I urge the present step, but because I love and honor his friend, and know her interest in his welfare."

The king's countenance changed while I spoke from an angry sparkle to a frank smile, and rising, he came rapidly towards me and took both my hands.

"Forgive me," said he. "A man in my extremities utters a thousand bitter words he would recall at any sacrifice. I have been ungrateful; I know how well you merit the friendship of her highness; I pray you add mine to that."

"Now you will go," cried Margaret, clapping her hands, playfully, "when two friends entreat you!"

Just then, Christine, who had left the room, returned with a lute, a bowl of some dark colored fluid, and a sponge.

"Your majesty will kneel down," she said.

"Far be it from Navarre," he replied, "to disobey the behests of so fair a lady. There now. Prythee, what fate awaits me?"

"I shall exercise an enchantment to change thy personality. First, I make certain passes with this sponge, for my necromancy is artistic. Close thine eyes, sire." And dipping the sponge in the mixture, she gently passed it over Henry's face, which immediately assumed a pale brown shade, and then similarly changed the hue of his hands, while Margaret indued him with helm, cuirass and mantle, and hung a lute on his shoulder.

"Rise, Sir Page!" said Christine, "and away to the north!"

The king rose, and lifting hand to helmet, said, "Is the play over?" And then noticing the new color, cried, "What is this?"

"Naught, save that thy beauty is hidden, O Boabdil the Moor!" laughed Margaret. "It never would have come to pass, except for Christine's spirit." And running up, she put her hands on Christine's shoulders, and stood on tiptoe to kiss my darling's lips.

"Very undignified," remarked the young lady.

"His majesty's saddle awaits him below," I said.

"Where is my disguise?" asked the duchess.

"I have it, madame," was the lady's reply.

Margaret waved her hand, and Christine and I turned to withdraw, when her highness took a step towards the king and threw herself into his arms.

"Farewell! farewell, my friend!" she sobbed. "Have no fear for me, I shall be shortly in Madrid—shortly then in dear France."

"Shortly then never to leave me," he murmured, kissing her passionately again and again. "Ah, it may be—perchance—perchance—farewell!"

In five minutes more the king was galloping bravely northward, and Christine, ordering the coach of the princess, re-entered.

It is not needful, after so open an escape, for me to say that the governor of the castle of Pavia had been one of my Merry Men of Madrid, and was at that moment apparently ill in bed of a malignant fever, his face being speckled with red paint very fearfully. So far I had risked him and myself, but no farther it seemed was I to be taken into the royal confidence.

In a few moments the princess, very closely veiled, Christine and the servants, came down. Among so many followers, it was impossible to tell was there one more or no; and I also thought it might have been the princess, or it might have been Ionio, in very high-heeled boots, who entered the coach, just wringing my hand with one small and well-gloved, and Christine prepared to follow.

"Lady Christine," whispered I, half laughing, "thou sawest how Navarre and Margaret parted. Hast no word, no kiss for me?"

"Not one," answered she, shortly.

"I prythee throw those white arms round my neck!" I besought, bowing low, and giving my mustache a twirl.

"Thine impudence and Ionio's!" she uttered, with a shrug, sweeping past; and entering the vehicle, whips cracked, spurs flashed, wheels crashed and rolled, and the heavy coach lumbered away.

Scarcely was it out of sight, when the imperial cortege of my sovereign, Charles V., drew near, and in a few moments his majesty stood in the hall, receiving the apologies of the steward for the plague-stricken governor's absence with a very ill grace, and demanding instantly the apartment of Navarre; and while he followed the steward and lieutenant, I slipped in among the train. As we approached the place so lately left by Navarre, an immense rattling of spurs upon the stone flags was audible, as if a corps of knights was dancing a bolero within.

We entered. Only a little, brown girl, who might have seen thirteen or fourteen autumns, with tangled brown locks hanging down round her face, and matted in points below her shoulders, with wide open brown eyes, and one short, tattered brown garment, which she held somewhat back that she might see the motion of her bare feet, as adorned with a pair of spurs, they pattered through the steps.

"Our prisoner amuses his solitude!" cried the emperor. "Whom have we here?"

"Only me; I wont hurt you!" answered the brown girl, without looking up, as she still held back her skirt and practised her dance.

"Where is the prisoner?" asked the king.

"Gone," she said.

"Gone!" cried he, in a terrible passion; and then waiting a while, he asked: "And who art thou?"

"It is Ionio, the dwarf," said one, while the emperor hid in his doublet a packet of papers, which I knew to be very important, and which Margaret had carelessly left on the table.

"Indeed I'm not," she replied, now glancing up; "nothing of the kind. He's a boy, and I am a boy—different, you'll allow!"

It was Ionio, then, whose hand I had wrung at parting.

"What dost thou here, child?" asked the emperor, sternly.

"O, I dance a little." And without intermission, she still kept balancing to and fro, and watching her little brown feet.

"Whence comest thou?—how art thou called?—what dost thou?"

"I come from Malaga," she answered, between the hummings of her little tune. "I am called—sometimes sharply—sometimes softly."

"Thy name, I mean!"

"Ahora la hermosura, i la ninaentonces, a solas valgo una reina mas en tropel voi malefica!"

"A long name," whispered one.

"A wretch, indeed! How old art thou?"

"As old as my tongue—somewhat older than my teeth."

"Fu! What dost thou, again?"

"Bah! I tell fortunes, beg and sing songs. *Senor soi pobre. Deme algunos pesos?*"

"What gettest thou?"

"Sweet cakes and cuffs," she answered, still dancing. "Now have done!"

"How camest thou here?" was the rejoinder, in a terrible tone.

"Bah! thou wouldst frighten me! Not *Carlos Quinto* himself can do that."

"I am *Carlos Quinto!* How camest thou here?"

"Thou?" And she absolutely stopped her dance and stared at him, while parting her hair for a better vision. After a moment she added: "Why, I slipped in when he slipped out!" And crying at the top of her voice, "*He visto el rei! He visto el rei!*" she skipped from the room and down the stairs.

A few hours later, when the emperor's wrath had partially evaporated, when he had looked in at the governor's scarlet face and cursed the castle and the soldiery, when he had sent out a force to scour the country, vainly—for by this time Navarre was skimming across the Mediterranean,—and when he had seated himself to a dinner fully worthy of his epicurean palate, I was mounting my roan below, but glancing up an instant, saw the face of Christine, who had surely left the castle, smiling on me from a lattice, and beckoning. I instantly sought her.

"The papers," whispered she. "I came back for them; I left them; he has them; I must recover them; they are the Regent's instructions to King Francis!" And she motioned me to follow her at a distance, while she sought the emperor's dining-hall.

A scarlet macaw was perched upon her bent wrist, and as she carelessly entered where sat the emperor and his dignitaries, and in and out of which servants were perpetually passing, half the guests rose in homage to the brilliant vision. Giving the bird a sudden start, it fluttered, screaming, from her white wrist, and circling over the table, alighted beside the emperor's dish, and unceremoniously inserted its bill in the savory viands thereon.

"*O, Cielo! veneno!*" shrieked Christine, as the emperor carried some of the same delicacy to his own royal mouth. "It is an American macaw; there is venom in his bill!—the emperor is poisoned!" she cried, profiting by the popular superstition, and making it serve her purpose.

The emperor rose paler than a corpse and trembling in every joint, while the ribbon that bound Margaret's papers hung peeping from his doublet.

"Ah, sire!" she cried, running forward in the frightful confusion that ensued, "I have the antidote. Quick, sire!" And leading him to a lounge, she bade him lie thereon, and herself loosened his doublet and vest.

The bundle of papers slipped unnoticed to the floor; for in the panic, terror drove all remembrance of them away. Taking a vial of oil from a large reticule hanging at her waist, I saw her secrete the documents in the same place with one hand and commence a vigorous friction of the emperor's chest with the other.

"The cordial! the cordial!" she cried, at last. "*O todos los santos!* it is in my bower! Wait, let me bring it!" And she darted from the room signalling me to follow, which I did, quietly.

I have heard the emperor and his suite waited above an hour for the cordial and Christine, and then, finding himself neither dying nor in pain, awoke to the consciousness that he had lost not only the papers but the culprit with them, and had been himself the subject of an uncomfortable joke; for Christine, I need hardly assure you, did not return to him in the castle of Pavia, but while they all awaited her in the dining hall, was mounting a little Barbary mare outside the gates, and I, with one foot in the stirrup was ready to accompany her. Just then the little brown girl came and stood beside me.

"Take me up," she commanded, "and instantly carry me to my brother Ionio!"

I did as she bade, and galloping on our way to join the princess and her retinue, soon the tower of Pavia was but a line against the twilight sky.

A month had passed, and the Princess Margaret of Anjouleme was known to be in Madrid, in the apartments prepared for her, but as yet gave no reception even to the emperor himself, so much of her time was passed, by the imperial permission, which could not well have been withheld, in the prison of her brother.

The western tower of Madrid was one built up square and mightily upon the outer wall, and was most frequently used for a watch-tower. It was a signal for me when, on approaching the city one dark night, seven bright lanterns hung down on the outside of the tower, and when, just as I was below the gates, I saw dimly the figure of the brown girl, half in shadow, on the top watching them; but the light fell full on her face with its wavering veil of matted hair, and seemed to nestle with only a softened fire behind the brown eye. Crossing the fosse, and letting myself in at the postern with one of many private keys, I wound up my way within the tower till I came to the great well, which was built to supply the city with water in case of siege. By the light of a torch fixed in the wall opposite, a casual observer, looking down the shaft, would have seen only a green, perpendicular depth of slimy stones, affording no possible foothold, and far down many hundred feet, a half sparkle of water. But to one who knew the machinery, trusting himself boldly to the windlass one instant, and blocks of stone slid out to meet him till he had descended the space of ninety feet. There he entered a narrow arch, and then crossed a succession of stone vaults, once filled with water, but now fortunately empty, until he came to a large upright flag, obstructing further progress; lifting this, and ascending one of two long staircases, which came down from the same place in different directions, he was in the apartment where I now find myself. Seven of my Merry Men sat round a table, all, as well as myself, masked. Behind a vacant chair, tall and regal, and unmasked, stood Christine; by her side, one with the slight dress and the manner of the brown girl, but who neither looked sufficiently like that personage nor yet like Ionio, to satisfy me of its identity.

There were seven columns standing in a line towards the end of the apartment, and behind the last one and hanging from it, lay an immense heap of coarse, gray gauze, always provided against surprises. From the roof overhead, which was of iron net-work, hung by the same column a rope connected with a shallow reservoir of water, with which the room below was sprinkled from time to time.

"The emperor," said one, "has been strictly searching for the Lady Christine and the brown girl. He has, we fear, obtained a clue. We wait your directions. The brown girl is, of course, safe enough."

I had thought as I descended the well that I was followed, and at this moment, from the rampart above, down rushed the counterpart of the figure standing by Christine, which I concluded was probably the brown girl herself.

"There are men walking on the walls!" she said; "and there are some following the Marquis de Escoriaza. They have tracked Christine. Haste! help me with the image!" And she wheeled out a veiled and tall wax figure from a niche, and with my assistance stood it beside a column, while Christine took up a position directly in front of it.

"Christine," I whispered, going close beside her, "trust in me; I can save you surer than by these expedients."

She laughed in my face.

"It is not possible," said she.

"Your life will be lost in an hour if the emperor is successful. I am but a blunt wooer; but Christine have some mercy!"

I held her hand and pressed it between mine. To my surprise and indignation, twisting it with a most execrable pinch, she flung it off; and with a mighty rush up the staircase, the emperor and a dozen armed gentlemen were before us. My seven masks rose simultaneously and withdrew among the columns, just behind Christine and myself, but all in the imperial sight.

"Now I have your sweet worship," cried the emperor, elate with success, and pausing to look around him. "Now I have her and the bold company who snatched Henry of Navarre away, who burned my palace of La Manca—because, forsooth, it had sheltered a French traitor,—who penetrate all the secrets of my jurisprudence, who even know the vaults of my inquisition halls! Now I have them!"

"Be not so sure, sire," said the mocking voice of Christine.

"Ah!" replied the emperor, "I have waited long for the antidote! thou hast brought it now, perchance?"

"I hope your majesty took kind care of the macaw?" said Christine, with a courtesy.

"The same care as I will take of its mistress; I wrung its neck!"

"Nay, puissant lord! One swallow doth not make a summer, nor one macaw a halter. *De donde se deduce que aconsejole que en adelante no le vuelva a meter con migo!*"

"No more bandying!" cried the emperor, having surveyed the apartment, and coming slowly forward; but evidently somewhat fearful of trusting himself among, Heaven knew what, secret traps and springs.

"My merry masquers," he said, turning to the masks, "are you not my subjects? I command you then to surrender."

"We are loyal subjects," cried all, "and therefore will not suffer our lord to shed innocent blood!"

"There is no escape other than by the stairway behind me," continued the emperor. "Heavens! what have we here?" It was the brown girl, over whom he had stumbled. "What! the imp that thwarted us at Pavia?—or is it the dwarf?"

The brown girl sprung to her feet, and catching Ionio's hand, whirled him round and about in the emperor's path, while, profiting by the moment, the masks all shifted their position in confusion, and covering Christine a moment from view, she darted behind the column, while they wheeled forward with some impetus the wax figure, which, as the veil was hastily tossed up, I saw to wear a perfect semblance of herself.

I still continued, of course, unknown, leaning against the column behind which was the real Christine, while several feet in advance stood the silent piece of wax-work.

"O," cried the brown girl, during this manœuvre, "one's me and one is he; which is Ionio now?" And seizing the little string hanging from the gauze, she darted like a shuttle to and fro before the columns and between us and the great doll.

I noticed that the emperor and all his company simultaneously rubbed their eyes, as if to remove a film or mote that partially weakened their vision. The brown girl had drawn a sheet of gauze between us.

"Have I improved in my dancing?" she cried, as chasseeing across again, another sheet of gauze intervened.

"Thou shalt dance on nothing ere long, little wretch!" cried the emperor. "What charm dost thou exercise on our eyes, thou hag?"

"No charm," she responded, as the third sheet of gauze obscured us more and more in the already dim apartment. "There is thy prisoner. Why not seize her? See how quietly she attends thee!"

"A bird in the hand!" quoth the emperor, as he strode forward and laid hold of her mantle. "It will go hard with this pretty poisoner," he said, turning to his gentlemen, "but I gather her friends there through her."

A dozen folds of the gauze, woven like lightning by the nimble dancing of the brown girl, had made us by this time like the shadowy peopling of a dream; and now Ionio pulling the string connected with the reservoir, a hissing sprinkle of ice-cold water fell on the satin cloaks of the royal party, extinguished their torch, and left the room in a state of drowned and midnight blackness. Snatching Christine in my arms, we all darted noiselessly down the stair-case, opposite to that I had ascended, just in time to hear the emperor, who had probably taken hold of Christine's counterfeit, exclaim: "By the mother of God! gentlemen all, it is naught but a figure of wax!" when we closed and barred the flag, and left those who had come to capture us, our prisoners.

At sunrise the mayor and alcade having been warned, liberated the royal company, and as I rode down the street, I saw Christine behind the curtains of the Princess Margaret. Riding on light-heartedly, I was joined by a friend.

"The emperor has just now received from that arch traitor, Rezana," whispered he, "a couple of parchments, setting forth the intentions of Francis towards resigning the crown; telling of the movements of Margaret; describing, among others, the Lady Christine, and giving the names of your eight Merry Men of Madrid. He has not yet read them, and will not till he has finished his Portuguese audience."

Here was a situation. He could now obtain Christine openly. I must say I trembled; but nevertheless, a certain boldness being my forte, proceeded on my duty.

It was two hours later. The emperor sat alone in his cabinet—a small, octagonally-shaped room, the eight panels of which were of the rare American wood, and before whose eight faces, stood on pedestals, eight life-sized bronzed knights in armor. His majesty leaned back in his chair, his face radiant with satisfaction, having perused the document concerning Francis, while that of Margaret, Christine and ourselves lay yet with an unbroken seal on the table before him. His imperial majesty was rather sleepy from the morning's business, and might have been partially dreaming, when he fancied that the eight knights, who had stood on their pedestals from time immemorial, all simultaneously nodded their eight heads at him. So far from waking up with a start, his highness continued dreaming, and even imagined that each figure raised the right arm, put forward the right foot, followed it up with the left, stepped from their eight pedestals, advanced towards him, extended eight gauntleted hands across the table, one of which seized the unread document, retired with eight low *conjees* backward to their pedestals, and took up their ancient positions without having once removed the eight pair of eyes that glittered behind the visors, away from his royal person. Agreeably with the preceding, the infatuated emperor conceived that his ears were suddenly stunned and his eyes dazzled by a mighty clash and rattle of armor, together with the swift shifting and shutting of the eight polished panels, behind which the eight phantasmagoria of his dream flashed from sight, and he awoke at last to find the precious sealed document really gone, and eight empty, bronze armors lying at the foot of their respective pedestals. At this moment the chamberlain and others entered to announce the advent of the Princess Margaret, whose reception was appointed at this hour, and the emperor, too proud to confess the singular occurrence, said nothing at all of his dream. Thus we still kept our secrets, and I confess no subject of King Francis longed more earnestly for his liberty than did I; for then Margaret would leave the fatal Spanish region, and Christine would be safe with her.

It was not long before I stood, with my peers of the Cortez, in the grand saloon of the palace, where Charles was sitting on his throne, and Margaret advancing, coronetted, brocaded and

jewelled, up through the long and magnificent arches. His majesty had not the eyes of a lover, and therefore in the dashing page who attended her could not have recognized Christine. The emperor rose and descended to meet her grace, kissing her hand, escorting her to his own seat and standing beside her. With a falcon eye he surveyed her in silence, then stooping, said in a low tone:

"I scarcely deemed that affronts offered to the brown girl of Pavia were to be forgiven by Princess Margaret, nor that in welcoming the Duchess d'Alencon to Madrid, I should meet the liberator and lady-love of Navarre!"

What more was said, I heard not, suddenly becoming aware that the handsome page was pressing on his mustaches, beside me.

"You hazard too much," whispered I.

"And what then?" said Christine.

"I beg you," I continued, "to slip away unnoticed."

"What is it to you," was the reply, "if I do or not?"

"You have won the emperor's hatred!"

"Nonsense! The emperor is less in anger than in love with me!"

"Well said, modest damsel, without vanity! Imagine I have bowed to the ground before such humility, since to do so in fact were at peril of your valuable life, O charming braggadocia!"

"I pray you miss not the chance for once, of such courtesy, at so slight a price!"

"Slight to you, mayhap; but not so with me."

"Do I not constantly slight you?"

"Somewhat slightly."

"And you think slightly of my slights?"

"I think at such times you will be an excellent coadjutor for a juggler, so fine is your sleight of hand."

"Far fetched! far fetched, sir marquis! you are no juggler, and my sleight of hand is naught to you!"

"Let the sleight go; I would the hand were mine!"

"But it is not. Christine is too fond of her freedom. 'Tis a hand not to be shown at the court of Spain!"

At this moment the lovely Andalusian, Dona Catrine, slipped her arm in mine, and leaving the coquetting beauty, I glided along with a handsome rival, till I was summoned to the emperor.

The princess and her train had just departed, and as Christine rattled her little sword by me, I was stooping low and devotedly towards my partner, whispering soft nothings in her ear. With a weakness common among lovers I hoped to my life that it made Christine miserable, for she deserved it.

"Senor," said the emperor, "we have but just concluded a matter with Portugal in which thou hast some interest."

I bowed and his majesty continued:

"A fleet sails from the Tagus in three weeks; craft and sailors are our neighbors, and are destined for the far and unexplored shores of Cathay. We send with them a strong force of our Spanish soldiery under our best commanders, according to compact. Our election falls on Montespan and the noble Marquis de Escoriaza. How say you, senor?"

Apparently I had liberty of choice, but all who knew Charles, knew what it was to refuse him, therefore I bowed again, expressed my thanks, received my orders, and left the palace with a bitter heart.

Four days of the three weeks remained; my merry men of Madrid were disbanded. The princess, having concluded her unsuccessful negotiations, was this day departing, and I rode by the side of Christine from the city and across the hills. We had fallen greatly behind the others, and with her wild sportiveness as we came to some more open country, she challenged me to a race. Rushing with a light hand across the soft fields, the blood well up with the exciting contest, we were neck and neck for a long run; suddenly my roan's head stretched forward with a low whinny, he flung out his strong, clean flanks with a quiver, covered the ground handsomely and left her rods behind. I heard a shriek half smothered in a chorus of masculine oaths, turned about in my saddle and saw Christine in the centre of a squadron of cavalry, led by the emperor himself. I spurred over the brow of the hill where I was, then flung myself to the ground and crept back among the long grass and rushes, to hear what disposition was to be made of the captive. They had reined up to a clump of cork trees and standing among the latter, I beheld the dauntless face of Christine, who instantly saw me and smiled, sitting unconcernedly while her fate was being determined.

"To the block!" I heard Alva cry.

"Hardly," said Charles, "for so small a crime."

"Banishment?" suggested the traitorous de Bourbon.

"Hispaniola? America? or the Ultima Thule?"

I saw the emperor guide his steed close beside the thicket where I was but half-concealed, saw a pistol-stock in his uplifted hand, felt as if the sky had fallen, a terrible concussion on my left temple; and fell in dead darkness. When I awoke, I was on the Portuguese flag-ship, far out at sea. Soon regaining my strength by the kind attentions of my companion, Montespan, I joined him in surmises respecting our probable success, and ere long, we both discovered that the admiral of our ship was one of those pedantic dolts who scarcely knew fair from foul, and had already separated from the two other ships of our mighty fleet.

Montespan had been on the coast of Africa before, and when the admiral said we had passed the Cape Verde outlines, he stoutly protested that the winds had blown us back and northward of the Western Islands. Our admiral laughed angrily at us, but when, as we drifted slowly southward, and every day should have brought us to the ivory coast, we became entangled in the mighty beds of the Sargossa Sea, he confessed despairingly his incompetency. Floating here, and now becalmed, we drifted slowly round and round among the inextricable weeds and accumulations of five oceans all swept to that common centre by a thousand currents, day after day; the sun rose and crawled, lurid, brazen and shorn of his beams, through the dun heavens; set and rose again; no rain fell; no wind blew; green slime rotted our keels; phosphorescent death lights illuminated the long, heaving sea at night; misery, starvation and death already hugged us.

Six months we still lay motionless, parched and dry with heat, when one day a damp, white fog surrounded us and shut out the brassy sky, the furnace-rage of the air, the fervid sun ever glaring like an arch-fiend upon us; a soft wind sprang up and drove us along gently, ere night, swiftly; by the next morning our sails, already weakened in creases by the burning heat, were rent in ribbons, and we were driving at a fearful rate, clear of the Sargossa and before a wild, tropical hurricane.

It is unnecessary to give the details of our disasters, nor how, hanging on the rocks that wrecked us, we hailed two ships bearing down in opposite directions; one was from Brazil, bound for Lisbon; it took off all but a few soldiers, Montespan and myself. The other held the noble Ponce de Leon, in his search for the Fountain of Perpetual Youth (which he secretly informed me was the precious metal of America). This bore the remainder of us away westward.

On we sailed, and after a night which was nothing but a soft twilight, Palm Sunday rose clear and serene upon us. Dark blue behind was the great ocean, a shallow, amber-colored sea was around, and hovering all along the western line a fringe of softest, welcomest green.

"Pasqua Florida!" shouted a mighty chorus, and as we neared the shores almost too beautiful for a dream, our commander echoed our words and took possession of Florida. We left the ship and the coast and marched inland for several days.

One afternoon, shall I ever forget it? we were traversing one of the boundless everglades, and had at last stepped from the quaking moss upon ground whose dark, luxuriant green contrasted well with the vivid brightness of the pestilent, rich marsh-lands around. Great ilices, hung with trailing festoons of gray, bearded moss, stood in a druid circle. Tall shrubs, gorgeous with myriad scarlet blossoms, grew up between; beyond, the magnolia loaded the air with its fragrance and rested the eye with its soft coloring. The jasmine, clambering from branch to branch, rendered the solemn, old trees all ablaze with pensile sprays of yellow stars, and lay, like drops of golden dew, among great purple clusters of vine-bunches. The scented fern and Florida rose grew in spurs at our feet, and in and out among them, sliding and crackling, hissed some brilliant serpent that had dropped like a sparkling line of living light from the bough above. Down a long vista, the chattering monkeys, hanging from the highest tips of motionless orange trees, tossed the golden fruit at one another, and splendid parrots, gay tongued, mocking and melodious ring-birds made the air lustrous with prismatic plumage.

But clearly to be distinguished amid all the singing of forest-birds, was a woman's voice carolling a Spanish ballad. At the sound, more unexpected than death itself, I started from my astonished comrades and fled down behind the ilices. What saw I? On my left, a waving field of grain; before me, two cottages nestling in a grove, and sitting at the base of a pomegranate tree that showered gentle rains of crimson petals down on the white garments, a lady with a vivid macaw on her white wrist. Blacker hair, brighter eyes, rosier cheek, sweeter smile, fresher soul than ever in Spain or Germany, I thought. Breathing quick and fast, I waited till the refrain of her song, and then, heart beating in throat, joined my voice with hers.

"Escoriaza! my life!" she cried, and started to her feet, passed her hand quickly across her eyes once and twice again, as if to rub away the deceitful vision, and then with the archest smile in the world and the clearest voice went on, and we finished the song together.

"His worship is welcome," then she said, "to my banishment. I have been expecting him, though somewhat earlier. Will it please him to honor my cottage with his presence, and to rest?"

I glanced at the cottages.

"One I occupy; the other, the servants allowed by my tyrant, and who manage the plantation," she explained. "I await your movement, senor."

I thanked her, and in a dozen words told her of our shipwreck, and my present expedition with Ponce de Leon. "Yonder, you may behold my companions, through the tree, Christine. I must on with them."

Her face grew whiter than the flower of the cotton tree, she fixed her eyes on me and twice opened her lips as if essaying to speak. I bowed low and half turned away; the feeble broken syllables just fell on my ear:

"And leave me?"

"Wherefore should I stay?" I asked.

"So near and lost?"

It were more than human to have withstood those beautiful, extended arms, those crimson lips inviting mine. I held Christine to my heart.

"You never told me you loved me!" said she, in a moment.

"Must I tell you now?"

"You have conquered, men always do," she murmured, and adding, as if to herself, "and are we not happiest in submission?"

There was a priest with our expedition, well acquainted with the marriage ceremony, and when my friends went on into the wilderness, they left me behind them. I had not lived in my paradise above a year before Montespan visited us; he had returned to Spain, and now again crossed the ocean to bring me the king's brevet, conferring the rank and office in these colonies, which I have ever since held; probably given that I might never trouble him in Spain again.

And thus was the glory of our house founded.

A stranger is received according to his dress, and taken leave of according to his merit.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE MAGNOLIA.

BY MRS. M. W. CURTIS.

Lovely flower, whose beauteous bloom
Fills the air with sweet perfume,
Dreams of beauty thou hast shed,
From thy grassy, verdant bed.
Erst of leaves bereft and sere,
Rising from cold winter's bier,
From the snows and frozen rain—
Mantling all the dreary plain.

Spring time gave to thee new life,
With bright hues and fragrance rife;
Leaves and heaven-tinted flowers
Sweetly gild the fleeting hours.
Thou wilt fade—the fadeless never:
Flowers immortal bloom forever;
These are found where angels dwell,
And all the flowers of earth excel.

If our earth is lovely here,
How must brighter worlds appear?
In immortal verdure drest—
By no mortal footstep pressed.
There, all-healing leaflets grow,
And pure crystal waters flow;
There, celestial flowerets fair
With their fragrance fill the air.

There, no chilling grasp of death
Stills the heart or clogs the breath;
Change may not come in that bright land
By the life-giving sephyr fanned;
There, cherished hopes are realized,
With the dear ones so fondly prized;
Yet, brightest dreams of life can ne'er
Picture that world so wondrous fair.

[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE FOSTER SISTER.

BY LIEUTENANT MURRAY.

HARK! that was the significant click of a rifle lock, and if the reader could turn his eye with us towards the willow copse that lines the roadside of the turnpike, he might detect the glistening steel of the weapon itself when the last rays of the setting sun played along its level tube.

One might have discovered, also, by glancing along that instrument of death, that its muzzle at that moment covered the persons of two individuals but a short distance further in the grove. Good Heavens! will he fire? is he about to commit a murder—that slender, pale-faced youth with the rifle?

Thrice he has aimed and thrice lowered again his weapon. Is conscience at work within his bosom? No! for the fiend-like expression of that pale face shows no signs of relenting There is some other reason why he pauses—perhaps to wait for a chance that shall expose but one of the parties to his aim. That must be the purpose—for see, the two have for a moment parted, and the sharp crack of a rifle rings and echoes through the woods, while one of those persons, a woman, sinks to the earth!

Hasten Harry Farnham, with thy bleeding and senseless burden to the house hard by. Pause not now to see who hath done this deed of blood, for the life tide is ebbing fast; and unless that subtle wound is closed anon, the vital spark itself will find egress from the body. One moment before, two cheerful, happy souls had been strolling full of hope and exultant life together, a gentle and beautiful girl and a gallant, manly companion; now, alas! how suddenly the scene has shifted and how agonized is the one with fear, how helpless and bleeding the other!

Gently is the sufferer laid upon her couch, and quickly is proper aid summoned to her side. It comes at last, none too soon, alas, almost too late. The heart barely palpitates; a few more ounces of blood, and life would have gone along with the purple flow. The room is darkened, voices are hushed, the surgeon watches every rise and fall of that scarcely moving chest, the cunning but well judged stimulus is administered and the professional man, really overjoyed at the success of his effort, answers the anxious looks of all as he comes gently out from the patient's room, after hours of uninterrupted watchfulness:

"She *may* now recover, but it was a fearful proximity to death's door, that she had reached!"

Up to this moment, so great was the anxiety for the life of the gentle being who was the idol of that household, no one had paused to ask how the accident had happened. It might have been a chance shot of some sportsman, quite far away; some such thought certainly passed through Harry Farnham's mind, if indeed he did not express it at the outset. This was certainly the most plausible idea that now presented itself to their minds, as they took time to consider the matter; but still Colonel Farnham took the precaution to send out three or four trusty servants through the neighborhood, to make inquiry as to whether any one had been out with a rifle.

The neighborhood at that period was sparsely settled, and the border of the old Salem Turnpike, as it ran near the west end of the town of Lynn in 1756, was a rough and forest-like spot. Was it some vindictive Indian who thus sought to revenge himself upon Colonel Farnham, by the murder of his dearly loved child? This question now passed through the minds of some, after diligent but ineffectual inquiry had been made. No, no, it was no Indian hand, but a pale face that sped that leaden messenger of death!

Colonel Henry Farnham was one of the early settlers of Essex county. Holding a commission both civil and military from the crown, his position was one of influence and high respectability. Here in the new world he had pitched his tent for life, and had gathered about him his household goods, and settled as he confidently hoped and believed permanently. His wife, a noble woman and a most proper mate, an only child Alice, the idol of his heart, and an adopted son, who was also his nephew, made up the immediate family circle. Harry Farnham was that nephew, and Alice was the wounded and beautiful being, his tenderly loved daughter.

Harry was the son of Colonel Harry Farnham's brother, who on his death bed confided him to his uncle. Harry's mother had died at the hour of his birth, and he had been left an orphan, his father soon following his mother to the land of spirits. Harry, still a little infant, was placed in the care of an honest young widow with an infant daughter, and who, with the two children, Colonel Farnham brought to America.

Little Harry and his foster sister Ellen were the pets of the household until about a year after their arrival in America, when Colonel Farnham became the happy father of Alice, whose promising babyhood foreshadowed not one half the real loveliness of the pure and beautiful girl she grew up to be. Our story has opened on her nineteenth birthday, which happened, also, to be Harry Farnham's twenty-first!

The children had grown up together in tender and affectionate companionship; Ellen Foster, the nurse's daughter, being permitted, with scarcely any exception, all the privileges enjoyed by the other two children, from the fact of her accidental relationship and connection with Harry. Until Harry was fourteen years of age, they had been mutually instructed by an honest puritanic teacher of the Bible, whose sacred character of minister had given him a welcome chair at the colonel's table as well as other immunities and privileges, which his gratitude led him to faithfully repay in the capacity of teacher to the children during week days, and this too, without interfering with his assumed duties on the Sabbath.

The good pastor had succeeded in infusing a spirit of emulation among the three as to their studies, and he would have been himself puzzled to say, at the period to which we refer, when Harry and Ellen were fourteen and Alice twelve, which of the three had made the greatest progress in the studies which they had carefully pursued. But Colonel Farnham at this period sent Harry to England for a collegiate education, and it was at that parting that the children knew their first great sorrow!

Those children loved each other very dearly, very purely and innocently. To them at that age, the *present* was everything they: knew no care, had not a wish ungratified, shared every pleasure with each other. But scarcely had Harry arrived in England and assumed his place in the university, and with even his boyish inexperience set himself down to realize and understand his position, before matters gradually began to assume a more fixed relationship and aspect. Though up to the day he had left his uncle and adopted father's roof, he had unhesitatingly and as tenderly kissed his little playmate, Ellen, for good night as he had done Alice, yet *now*, as he found himself sitting down to write home, he not only remembered Colonel Farnham's remark that he might write to *Alice* often, without alluding to Ellen, but also himself realized the propriety of addressing her, and *not* Ellen.

It was hard for him at first to realize the distinction which he had never recognized between them before, but his own good sense, boy as he was, guided him to a conclusion which his uncle's words also indicated. So he wrote to Alice, but in his letters he never forgot Ellen, never failed to mention her with reference to the tender associations of the past, and these passages, and indeed the whole of Harry's letters, Alice always read to Ellen, at least, for several years after Harry went away from them across the water. Then again, of course, Ellen could not write to Harry Farnham. She could only desire Alice to remember her kindly to him when she wrote. Thus there was a *break* between Harry and Ellen, while the early intercourse of Alice and her cousin was only cemented by a correspondence which became regular and very dear to them both. Ellen still grew up, side by side with Alice, enjoying nearly all the immunities of the beautiful heiress herself, for Colonel Farnham was a rich man, and she an only child. It would be hard to say which of the two young girls was the most beautiful. Alice was scarcely more delicate and ladylike than Ellen, though the latter had a few of those indications of humble birth, in hands, feet, and ruddier complexion, that a nice discernment would be apt to detect.

Up to a certain period, as we have intimated, Alice was accustomed to read her letters to Ellen, but at length there came passages in them which caused the color to glow upon her maiden cheek and her young heart to beat more quickly as she read them to herself. These matters were passed over when she read the letters to Ellen, but the quick-witted English girl did not fail to detect the meaning of this. Henceforth there grew up incontinently between them a spirit of restraint when together, and gradually an almost total separation of common interests and associations.

Will the reader once more refer to the day on which this story opens? On the road between Chelsea and Lynn, midway upon the low marsh that makes up for the bay, is a bluff which is to this day covered with a grove of old thick-set trees. Within this grove there now stands a horse saddled and tied to a tree, while upon the ground near him sits a person, apparently a young man of, say twenty years. He is busily and somewhat nervously engaged in examining a package of papers, letters, and like material, evidently mail matter. So much and closely is he engaged in reading one of the letters which he has carefully opened, that the party of three or four persons on horseback now passing the spot are quite unnoticed.

Look well at this individual. He is so singularly occupied, there is such an air of stealth about what he is doing, that one is apt to conclude there is something wrong about the business. And now we look again we have seen that face before; it is the same pale, expressive countenance that beamed along that rifle barrel in Colonel Farnham's grove!

Yes, it is the same, dress and all, there can be no mistake. It is just two hours previous to the moment when the opening scene of this veritable sketch occurred. Let us watch the strange person who is now thrusting back those letters into the private post-bag, after carefully resealing the one which had been so eagerly perused. He mounts the horse and is off at a hand gallop towards Lynn, and now enters Colonel Farnham's ground. Evidently avoiding observation, he pauses and almost drops to the earth at the sight of two persons coming down the main path.

To step one side and conceal himself is the work of but a momen The two persons who have just past are Harry Farnham, just returned from abroad, and Alice, his dearly-loved cousin.

The party whom we have been so closely observing, rising from the place of concealment, stole towards the wing of the main building, and almost instantly returned with a rifle. The reader knows the rest. We may now follow this person, who, having sped that fearful messenger intended for Alice's heart now steals once more into the wing of the dwelling, and hastening to an apartment on the second floor, entered it locking the door behind, and with the rapidity of thought throwing off the attire of coat, vest, etc., then appeared as if dropped from a cloud—Ellen Foster!

This disguise and a secret understanding with one of the servants in the colonel's family had enabled her to go regularly to Boston for the mail at each arrival, and to read clandestinely the letters which Harry sent to Alice; for though these gave her infinite pain, from their tenderness, yet there was a sort of strange relief to feel that she knew *all* he did say to Alice. She loved Harry Farnham, her foster brother, as deeply as hopelessly, and when on returning on this occasion she found that Harry had come back, passing her on the road while she was engaged with his letters, and found Alice leaning tenderly upon his arm, the fierce jealousy of her heart was beyond endurance, and she did what we have seen.

"What have I done?" she sobbed, with her cheek scarcely less pale than the white sheet upon which it was now pressed, as she lay upon her bed terribly exercised with fear. "Have I killed her?"

A few hours sufficed to relieve her mind of this horrible suspense, but when Harry Farnham inquired for his foster sister, she was gone, nor could the most diligent search ever trace her out. Colonel Farnham discovered that *his rifle had been discharged*, a fact which at once fixed the crime that had been perpetrated, upon his own household. He said nothing of this, he was a keen observer of human nature, and he knew that Ellen loved Harry, and he was satisfied from whence that shot was fired, and by whom.

He also allowed the loss of Ellen to be respectably mourned, and was glad that none suspected what he firmly believed.

Harry Farnham and Alice were, shortly after her recovery, joined in wedlock, and there are in Essex county to-day grand-children of that happy union of the cousins. This sketch is true.

SHARP PRACTICE.

Some five years since, two well known Albanians left this city to seek their fortunes at Washington. We will call them Mr. A. and Mr. B. Mr. A. got a contract from the government, and made a snug little pile, some forty thousand dollars worth of real estate. While acquiring this property, Mr. A. contracted about $7000 worth of debts, two thousand five hundred of which belonged to Mr. B. Mr. A. is not any more honest than the law allows. So he thought he would get rid of "those cussed bores," his creditors, by making over his property to his niece, a fine looking young lady, aged about eighteen. He accordingly went to a lawyer, made out the papers, and assigned the whole of his real estate to his niece, the interesting young lady already spoken of. Having concluded his arrangements, he thought he would go south and look at the country. This took place last summer. During his absence in pursuit of quietness and cotton fields, Mr. B. ascertains all about the assignment, and goes for making things square. He commenced operations by courting the niece aforesaid, and finished up by marrying her. When Mr. A. returns from Georgia, he finds that he has been done—that Mr. B. has not only get thirty-seven thousand, but five hundred dollars worth of real estate in addition. Mr. A. is now swearing in eight syllables, and insists that it is a conspiracy. He talks of writs, law and red tape, but as the statutes will not allow a man to take advantage of his own wrong, we fear he will have to "grin and bear it." It is not necessary for us to say that Mr B. feels first rate over the achievement, while the niece cannot understand why her uncle should give her forty thousand dollars worth of real estate, and then fly into a passion just because she bestowed it on her husband. If we are not mistaken, this is the best piece of sharp practice that has turned up this season.—*Scientific American.*

There is sunshine after every shower. Over every person's life, there are, at some time, clouds dark and gloomy, which it seems impossible can ever be lifted up. But there is a blue sky above them. Those clouds may be sickness, poverty, grief, distrust of humanity, want of faith in God—but "whatsoever thy doubts, they shall be no more, whatsoever thy discouragements, they may all be surmounted, whatsoever thy unworthiness, it shall all pass away."

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[Written for The Flag of our Union.]

THE GREEK ADVENTURER:

—OR,—

THE SOLDIER AND THE SPY.

A TALE OF THE SIEGE OF SEBASTOPOL.

BY LIEUTENANT MURRAY.

[CONCLUDED.]

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TWENTIETH OF JANUARY.

The sun arose in a cloudless sky on that appointed day toward which all the inmates of Beacon Hall now looked with such varied feelings and expectations. The old hall, illumined by the rising sun, laid aside its dim and mysterious air, and became bright and cheerful in its appearance. The fields without, the groves and hedges, the brooks and streams, all became beautified in the morning dawn. Never had the old hall and its noble grounds appeared so grandly.

But within the large apartment of Sir Gasper D'Arcey all was gloom and darkness. The heavy curtains, drawn closely together, suffered but a scant supply of light to enter the room, and amid the dimness and indistinctness of all around, but little could be discerned. It was such a light, and such an atmosphere, as is permitted to dwell in the room of one who lies at the point of death.

Sir Gasper was on his chair, covered up with thick clothes. But a part of his face was visible, and as he lay reclining upon the cushioned seat, he seemed too feeble, too sickly to last much longer. He appeared so debilitated that a slight shock, or an abrupt blow of any kind, might be sufficient to kill him.

Richard sat at a chair by the window, silent, motionless, with a face as expressionless and impassive as ever. These two alone were in the room. The hour of nine was slowly tolled out by the deep toned bell of a large clock in the hall without.

"Here they come, sir!" said Richard.

Footsteps were heard approaching the room, and Sir Gasper, after arranging a fold of the quilt which lay over him, awaited the entrance of the visitors.

"Come in!" said Richard, as a knock sounded at the door.

The heavy portal was thrown open. Henry D'Arcey and his son Reginald slowly entered and quietly approached the chair of Sir Gasper.

"Good morning, brother!" exclaimed Henry D'Arcey, as he came up to Sir Gasper. "My God! how pale you are! Do you feel any better?"

"No," said the sick man, faintly.

"I have not been able to visit you, dear brother," said Henry D'Arcey, "so frequently as I would have wished, for these last few weeks. I trust you will forgive me?"

"O, certainly," said Sir Gasper.

"I am deeply grieved to see you so low as this. I thought that the last medicine which I sent you would put you out of pain."

"It did, nearly," murmured the sick man.

Henry D'Arcey's face wore a strange expression as he heard his brother's reply.

"I hope, my brother," he said, "I hope that you may yet recover."

"No—why hope so? foolish!" said Sir Gasper.

"Yet let me hope—there is a pleasure in hoping. But I come to you, dear brother, with dreadful news this morning—"

"Ah?" said Sir Gasper, quietly.

"Dreadful news—most dreadful—so terrible that although I heard it several days ago, I had not the courage to tell you—"

"Indeed?"

Henry D'Arcey was evidently surprised.

"My brother, I pity you!" he went on to say. "Forgive me if I be the unwilling bearer of this most awful intelligence."

There was a pause. Henry and his son drew nearer to Sir Gasper, and did not see Richard, as he silently went to the door and turned the noiseless lock.

"Sir Gasper—my brother!" continued Henry D'Arcey, in funereal tones.

"What?" replied Sir Gasper, with a coolness which to his brother was utterly inexplicable.

"You are childless!"

"Ah? Indeed!"

"Good heavens, Sir Gasper," said Henry, now roused and exasperated by this unexpected indifference, "do you hear what I say?"

"I do."

"You are childless?"

"Ah?"

"I mean," said Henry, in a loud tone of voice, "I mean that your son, your boy, the light of your eye—your comforter and protector, will return no more to you! Lionel is dead!"

"Liar!" suddenly sounded from behind Henry D'Arcey, in the fierce tones of a voice which could not be mistaken.

The father and son turned round in terror, amazement and dismay! At the same time, the curtains were pulled wide apart—the gloom fled—and the rays of the sun streaming in, fell upon the noble form and features of Lionel D'Arcey! There he stood—alive—well—stronger only through all his misfortunes.

"Liar!" he cried. "Liar! who comes thus to torture my father. Is this your work? this the success of your magnificent scheme? Alas, baffled wretch!"

The frame of Henry D'Arcey shook with a thousand emotions. He was speechless. His son stood by him, and in the immensity of their astonishment they seemed stricken dumb.

"You thought I was dead—did you?" sneered Lionel. "You trusted to Philippo's tidings. Poor baffled conspirator—defeated plotter—behold the result of your infamous scheme! I, who was esteemed dead, am living and come home for vengeance; while he in whom you trusted, has died, and dying confessed all his sins!"

Lionel moved towards his trembling uncle.

"You are dyed and stained by a thousand infamous crimes. I know enough of you to bring you to the gallows, and to send your son an eternal exile from his home. Yet I will not do so. What punishment is so severe to one like you as the maddening consciousness that in every point he has been beaten. For you are overthrown. All your schemes have come to nothing. You are ruined, and beaten!"

"Beaten? baffled? foiled?" answered Henry D'Arcey, making a mighty effort to throw off his agitation. "Foiled?" he repeated, gathering confidence from the sound of his own voice. "Boy! when did you come home, that you are ignorant of the complete success of one scheme?"

He spoke with a bitter sneer, and an expression of fiendish malice in his face.

"Success in any of your schemes is what I would wish at this moment to see you show me," said Lionel.

"Though I may not have the mournful consolation of telling my brother that his beloved boy, his noble Lionel, is dead, yet perhaps one solace may be left me. Young, inexperienced, unsuspecting boy! When you go from your home, why do you leave tools for the hands of those who know how to use them?"

"Tools?" said Lionel, scornfully.

"Yes, tools such as he." He pointed to Richard, who rose up, and with his unalterable countenance stood reverentially before them. "Tools? yes, tools. You spoke of Philippo, and lo a greater than Philippo is here! Ha, ha!" laughed the villain, boldly, mockingly. "Ha, ha! I cannot say now, 'Father, your son is dead!' but this I can say, 'Son, your father is dying!' Behold!" he cried triumphantly, turning and pointing to Sir Gasper who had hitherto been silent.

Sir Gasper flung off the quilt, rose vigorously to his feet, strode up towards his brother and folding his arms, gazed sternly, relentlessly upon him. The younger brother quailed beneath the fierce glance of those terrible eyes, and again in sudden astonishment was still.

"Henry D'Arcey! Reginald D'Arcey! Where now is your exultation? Is Beacon Hall yours? Is Sir Gasper dead?"

Father and son were silent.

"And think you Richard was a tool? You, who are proud of your penetration—you, who call yourself my brother—look at him! He, and he only, is the cause of your ruin. To him you are indebted for this. But for him, and his incorruptible fidelity, mingled with impenetrable secrecy of soul, we would have fallen victims to your villanous arts! He—the tool—the slave to gold! he—Richard, the humble valet! he has conquered you!"

Then light and knowledge flashed into the minds of Henry and Reginald—then they knew and understood all. As Henry turned, he saw Richard standing calm—unaltered—unaffected! He gnashed on him with his teeth.

"Was I ever unjust to you, Henry?" said Sir Gasper. "Was I ever otherwise than generous? My house was your home, my purse was open to you, my heart always beat warmly towards you. But now I know you! I know you for an abandoned villain—a monster of iniquity! You have arrived at a height of wickedness and guilt which I shudder to contemplate! Your whole life has been one of villany and dishonesty—of vile conspiracy, plotting and spying! Were you guilty of but one offence, I might be willing to put down and annihilate the demands of my heart for vengeance. But to you—a hardened ruffian, whose guilt is so black, whose offences spread over a lifetime—to you there can be no pity—for you no mercy!"

"I ask for none!" cried Henry. "I expect none—and least of all from you! But you cannot punish me. Who can prove anything against me? If my measures were unsuccessful, they were artfully contrived, and I am safe. I stand involved in an impenetrable wall. Who are they who can be witnesses against me?"

"I!" cried Richard, advancing forward. "I have your papers. I knew secret passages to the turret-chamber which you knew not!"

"There! 'tis over!" cried Henry D'Arcey, staggering as though a blow had struck him. "Secret passages! Good heavens! Why did I not think of that?"

"Who are your accusers?" cried Lionel, heedless of his uncle's remarks. "The dying testimony of Philippo, which is even now in the hands of the lords at home."

"Philippo?" cried Henry.

"And here, too," cried Lionel, drawing forth a paper which Henry D'Arcey well knew, "here, too, is a testimony against you. If the papers which Richard might find could prove nothing against you, this would serve to brand you, and hang you, as a Russian spy!"

"A spy!" cried Henry D'Arcey, now no onger master of himself, and unable to bear up under so much disappointment. "A spy? Who told you that? It cannot be proved—I swear it cannot. No one in England knows it! Pooh! I tell you I am not. What are you, that you dare to bring up such a charge against me? Begone! I am a true man! That letter—it is a secret sign and symbol. Who can detect its meaning?"

"It is a cypher of your invention," answered Lionel. "You rave when you speak as you do. See this cypher. Is it not explained? And do you think that writing of this kind could be a barrier to discovery? Behold! I have discovered it!"

Henry D'Arcey stamped his foot upon the floor in rage. He darted forward to snatch the paper. Lionel drew back.

"The king of darkness himself has assisted you! He has turned from me to you, and he alone has brought this about!" Henry D'Arcey cried, in a kind of frenzy.

"The king of darkness? No! You, who recognize no other ruler," said Sir Gasper, "you may call it the power of the king of darkness; but we recognize another power—it is that of the Most High, who will not suffer the innocent to perish, nor the guilty to escape!"

"Then there is no more need to remain here," said Henry D'Arcey, moving towards the door. He turned the knob. The door was locked—Richard held the key.

"Are you going to detain me as prisoner?" he cried.

"To what end? No. But you must remain a moment longer."

"I acknowledge myself beaten, baffled, foiled," said Henry, walking back a step, as a thought seemed to strike him. "Yet I have one single consolation. It does not concern you, Sir Gasper, but it concerns yon boy—yon stripling!" he repeated, contemptuously; "who was the first to give me this series of disappointments. For he must stay here in England, while his Grecian maiden—his betrothed—is far away. For him there will be no joys of love and matrimony to crown his present happiness. She is away, safe enough, I vow, on Russian soil, and her Lionel must sigh in vain for her, during the long years of this war!"

Lionel said not one word.

"And her property, too, is there, if that be any additional grief?" said his uncle, maliciously.

Still Lionel was silent.

A light sound of footsteps was then heard, and a small door at the end of the room was opened. Henry D'Arcey and his son looked at one another in consternation. For there, beautiful as ever, stood Irene, and beside her was the stately form of Madame Arbanon.

"It is time for me to go! My last hope is gone!"

"See," cried Lionel, as he advanced towards Irene and took her hand, "see how heavily your curse and bitter wrath fall down upon my devoted head! Russia! Ah, you thought that beloved country was the home of my Irene!"

"Go!" said Sir Gasper to his brother. "Away! Begone forever! Never more let your shadow darken this threshold! Never more let your face come near to mine! Begone forever, and let me never see you—never hear of you—or," and his voice grew deep and terrible in its menacing tone, "or you will see what punishment is in store for a *Russian spy!*"

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DENOUEMENT.

On the day after the incidents described in the last chapter, the steamer for Calais left the port of Dover, with a large company of passengers. The day was dreary in the extreme, and severely cold. Across the dull leaden sky the scud drifted with dizzying velocity, while the strong wind, rushing from the realms of night and eternal winter, rolled the waves of the North Sea through the Channel in black ridges, while the foam, whirled away as rapidly as it was formed, was driven along horizontally in showers of spray. The little steamer labored heavily, though she was staunch and strong, with her bows now rising high in the air, and anon plunging deep in the water while she rolled from side to side, one paddle-wheel being occasionally clear of the water, while the other was buried in it deeply.

The passengers huddled together in the cabin, clinging to their seats and consoling themselves for the roughness of the passage by the hope that it would be soon over. But one among them seemed the very spirit of unrest. He was a man advanced in life, well dressed and wrapped in a thick broadcloth cloak. He spoke to no one, though his eyes wandered uneasily from face to face. Preoccupied as were his travelling companions with the annoyance and perhaps peril of their situation, they could not help noticing the movements of this strange person. After sitting for a few moments in the cabin, he would suddenly spring up and rush upon deck. Those who watched him thither, saw him clinging to a rope, gazing forth upon the boiling waters with a face so wild and agitated, that it seemed to reflect the terrors of the wintry gale. And on deck he was as restless as in the cabin. He changed his place as often as a lull in the tempest and a moment's steadiness in the boat permitted him to move with safety. At last he went forward, and one of the passengers afterwards remembered seeing him in the bow, drenched with water, his gray hair streaming in the furious wind.

All of a sudden the appalling cry of "man overboard!" burst from the lips of the man at the wheel. The crew and some of the passengers sprang to the vessel's side. A dark object was seen rapidly drifting to leeward; the wild, despairing shriek that rang out above the roar of the storm told that it was a human being sinking in the waters of the channel—sinking hopelessly! for no boat could live a moment in that whirl of waters. Planks were thrown overboard—and this was all that they could do. Once more rose the despairing shout from sea to sky from the human waif upon the waters—a cry that rang in the ears of those who heard it for many an after day and night. The captain's glass rendered the distorted and terrified countenance of the drowning man distinctly visible. At last it disappeared—a bubble or two flecking the foamy side of a huge wave alone indicated the spot where a human being had sunk to rise no more until the sea gives up its dead. The captain heaved a deep sigh as he dropped his glass; but he knew not—none knew that in that wild storm, the vengeance of Heaven had overtaken the traitor to his kin and his country, the false brother and false Briton, the intentional but foiled fratricide, Henry D'Arcey! He had embarked for the continent under a false name—had been swept from the deck by an irresistible sea, and the heavy money-belt he wore at his waist, the fruit of his treachery, had hastened his awful fate.

Reginald D'Arcey was to have rejoined him on the continent; he lingered behind for a purpose with which he did not deem it fitting to acquaint his father. Bad as he was, yet every germ of goodness had not been utterly extinguished in his nature. In the paralyzing blight which had fallen on his guilty hopes—hopes, which it must be remembered a father had nurtured—he turned to the image of the beautiful gipsey girl to whom he had been united in a manner so strange and so dreamlike. He would see her, he thought—and confess all. He would lay before her the secrets of his guilty life—she should be his confessor and his judge. He had pledged his hand to her in good faith—he had bestowed it on her compulsorily—but still he was bound to renew the offer. If rejected, he would then leave England forever. If accepted, her home should be his home, her people his people, and if he suffered humiliation by descending to associations and a life so far below the station he was born to, did he not owe an expiation—and a bitter one—for the crimes and errors of the past?

With these views, after the terrible scene at Beacon Hall, and after a hurried parting with his father, he wended his way towards the gipsey camp, not certain whether he should find the wandering tribe in the same locality.

Entering the confines of the forest through which he had lately ridden at so wild a rate, he recognized the pathway and slowly pursued its course. He had not gone far, however, plunged in painful reverie, and agitated by conflicting fears and emotions, when a shadow crossed him, and a man, confronting him, sternly bade him "halt!" It was the young gipsey, Mark. He appeared much excited, and his countenance had an expression of stern menace and of evil passion.

"Back!" said the gipsey. "Your path lies yonder. That you are following takes you to the gipsey camp."

"I know it," answered Reginald. "I am going thither."

"You are mistaken," said the gipsey.

"I know my own purpose," answered Reginald, quickly.

"Answer me then," said the gipsey. "Whom seek you in our camp?"

"Zerlina," replied D'Arcey.

"Yes," said the gipsey, with a bitter laugh. "To gloat over the ruin you have achieved."

"Ruin!"

"It was my word, fair sir. Zerlina is pining away—waiting for the bridegroom who will never come."

"But I *do* come to claim her hand—if she will yet receive it," said D'Arcey.

"Hear me, Reginald D'Arcey!" said the gipsey. "I loved Zerlina even before your eyes beheld her. You wooed her to her ruin. I exposed your designs to her—but still she loved you. I tracked you to your home—I found out your real name. I discovered that you loved another. I told her so, and still she loved you. Her mother insisted on your marrying her—and I consented to entrap you and aid in compelling you to redeem your promise of marriage, because I knew it would be to humiliate you. But though she knew you wedded on compulsion, still she loved you. Now, listen to me—renounce her, and she will recover from her mad passion."

"I will not renounce her," said D'Arcey, firmly, "till I hear from her own lips that she has ceased to love me."

"Fool!" said the gipsey, beside himself with passion. "Do you think I will trust you, with your soft words and ready pledges, in her presence? Begone! D'Arcey! begone, or dread a gipsey's vengeance!"

"Never!" said D'Arcey, his courage rising with the emergency. "I will pursue this adventure to the end."

"You rush upon your fate!" cried the gipsey, as, springing forward like a panther, he seized his rival by the throat.

"Unhand me, dog of a gipsey!" shouted D'Arcey, struggling to free himself from the gripe of his opponent.

"Give up Zerlina, then!" said Mark.

"Never!" replied Reginald.

"You will have it then!" retorted the gipsey. "So be it! Your blood be on your own head."

A glittering blade in the right hand of his antagonist gleamed before his eyes. Changing his grasp from the throat to the hair of his enemy, the gipsey extended his right arm before drawing the keen edge of his broad knife across his victim's throat. A sickening sensation came over Reginald and his eyes swam in his head. But at that instant rang the report of a fire-arm! The gripe relaxed, the blade dropped harmless to the earth, and the gipsey, with one deep gasp, fell to the earth a lifeless corpse!

Reginald turned to see who was his preserver, and there—her eye flashing fire, her foot advanced, her left hand clenched, her right still grasping an extended pistol—stood Zerlina, thin and pale indeed, but beautiful in her stern fury and her terrible triumph.

In an instant more, hate, vengeance, melted before a deeper passion. She dropped the fatal weapon, tears burst from her eyes, and murmuring, "he loves me still!" she sank, fainting, into the arms of him she had preserved from so terrible a death.

Mutual explanations followed Zerlina's recovery. After what had passed, instant flight was urgent. A hurried visit to the gipsey camp—an interview with the queen to whom Zerlina told all—the hurried escape of Ella, her daughter and of Reginald, with the jewels and money which the first had hoarded, and which she kept in a casket ready for any emergency, were incidents that rapidly followed.

Dispensing with their gipsey attire, and assuming garments less attractive, they joined Reginald, who was in waiting, and were soon whirling away at the top speed of an express train. Reginald, with his companions, traversed in safety that stormy Channel, where, a few hours before, his father had closed his guilty career. France was gained at last, and here Reginald, with his bride and her mother, determined in a quiet country retreat to pass the remainder of their days.

But the curtain must not descend upon our drama, without a parting glance at those with whom we can sympathize warmly and deeply.

A week passed away, and the old hall was gaily decked without and within, and preparations were made for a great feast. The customs of past days were revived, and while the brilliant lamps flashed from the long windows of the lofty hall where the hundred guests were gathered at the feast, the merry song, and the joyous country dance all spoke of high-wrought festivity.

Gaily Sir Gasper moved around among the guests, arm in arm with Sir De Lacy Evans, who had come to see him, and to give away the bride. For this was the wedding of Irene and Lionel, and on this night, amid mirth and fitting festivity, she became the bride of her *soldier lover*.

Jester's Picnic.

Putting a Case.—The following is a good illustration of a style of disputing which has not yet gone out of fashion. Some people can never enter into a discussion without losing their temper.

A.—Supposing I had a ship at sea.

B.—But you have no ship at sea.

A.—Well, *supposing* I *had* a ship at sea.

B.—(Warming up). But I tell you, sir, you have no ship at sea.

A.—(Speaking in capitals). But SUPPOSING I had a ship at sea.

B.—(In a violent passion). Fire and furies! you false rascal, you have no ship at sea.

A. strikes B.—B. returns it; a row—enter policeman, who escorts the parties to the court-house.

An Irish Bard.—A wandering Hibernian poet, a legitimate descendant of the Celtic bards, lately, in a moment of inspiration, gave vent to the following "pathriotic effusion:"

How doleful is the state of Ayrin,
Dissected by tumultuous shtrife—
Boys airy—in Tip'rary—
Wid pistil, stones and carwin knife;
But wait until repale's constructed,
An' other hallucinashins fair;
Then Misther and Mrs. Kavanah
Will turn about, be med lord may'r."

The judge recently called at the village store, designing to make the purchase of a mackerel. Several friends were in who knew that the judge had become a good temperance man, and were willing to run him a little. The storekeeper joined in the sport and begged the judge to take a little something. "What will you have, judge? Take anything you like." The judge looked around, as if in doubt what to choose and replied: "*I believe I will take a mackerel!*" Helping himself, he gravely walked out of the store, and was not invited to take anything there again.

Sydney Smith says: "Most London dinners evaporate in whispers to one's next neighbor. I make it a rule never to speak to mine, but fire across the table; though I broke the rule once, when I heard a lady who sat next me, in a low, sweet voice, say—'no gravy, sir.' I had never seen her before but I turned suddenly round and said, 'Madam, I have been looking all my life for a person who disliked gravy; let us swear eternal friendship.'"

An Irish Certificate.—A poor son of the Emerald Isle applied for employment to an avaricious hunks, who told him he employed no Irishmen: "For," said he "the last I had died on my hands, and I was forced to bury him at my own charge." "Ah! your honor," said Pat, brightening up, "and is that all? Thin you'll give me the place, for sure I can get a certificate that I nivir died in the employ of any masther I ivir served."

A gentleman asked a country clergyman for the use of his pulpit for a young divine, a relation of his. "I really do not know," said the clergyman, "how to refuse you; but if the young man should preach better than me, my congregation will be dissatisfied with me afterwards; and if he can preach worse, I don't think he's fit to preach at all."

An itinerant preacher of Virginia, being invited to hold forth in one of the back settlements, took for his text the words—"Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God"—divided his text into three parts, thus—first, the skin worms; secondly, what they done; and thirdly, what the man seen after he was eat up."

As a proof of French luxuriousness, we may as well mention, that the young Comte de Carambolage has his stables at Chantilly sprinkled with eau-de-cologne regularly three times a day. A bottle of fleur d'orange is also emptied into every pail of water before the horses are allowed to take a single drop.

The following scene occurred at a hotel out West, about noon time: Traveller—"How much do you charge for dinner?" Hotel Keeper—"One dollar, sir." Traveller—"Very cheap; how much for supper?" Hotel Keeper—"Twenty-five cents." Traveller—"Well, bring me a supper, sir."

"*Out under Arms*"—A ragged individual was saluted a few days since by a little urchin, thus: "I say you, sir, don't you belong to the army?"

"No'" was the indignant reply.

"Well," said the boy, "I thought you did, as you are *out under arms!*"

A lawyer had his portrait taken in his favorite attitude, standing with his hands in his pockets; the sitter, unaccustomed to a wax, and asked if it did not look natural, to which he replied, "It would resemble you more closely if you had your hands in your client's pockets."

The editor of the Hoosier Patriot talks to his readers in this wise: "Our boys got too smart for us this week, and set up the paper before we began to think of writing editorial. However, we are not sorry, and do not suppose our subscribers regret it very much."

Don't say Neigh!—We understand that some check has been given to the horse-eating mania by the fear that the too frequent eating of osses will bring on a tendency to ossification of the heart.—N. B. The reader is requested to respond to the above with a horse-laugh!

"Our prospects is very dark," said Bread, the baker, on the occasion of a rise in flour. "Yes," said Mrs. Partington, "and so is your bread; but," said that estimable lady, looking benignantly on him through her specs, "your loaves are light enough."

There is nothing so bad but it might be worse. An old philosopher, affected with two diseases, thanked heaven, when one attacked him, that he was free from the other; and when squirming with the other, was grateful that they did not both come together.

Little Boy—"Father, did you have any wife beside mother?" Father—"No, my son. Why?" Little Boy—"'Cause I saw in the old family Bible that you married Anno Domini in 1835, and mother's name was Sally Smith."

During a great storm on the Pacific Ocean, a vessel was once wrecked, and a Quaker tossing to and fro on a plank, exclaimed, over the crest of a wave, to another who was drifting by on a barrel, "Friend, dost thou call this Pacific?"

Mr. Berrown lately went into the country for the first time in his life, and records it as a singular coincidence in nature, that every pond he saw—"and there were many on 'em"—had land round it. Mr. Berrown is evidently a "natural philosopher."

"Wife, why in the name of goodness, did you not make the washerwoman put starch in my shirt collar?" "Why, my dear, I thought it a useless waste of the article, for I can get your choler up so easy without it."

An indignant rider on one of the New York railroads, when his dead-head ticket was cut off, declared that the company should never have a cent of his money, as he would in future pay his fare to the conductors.

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